



Meeting attachments

Audit and Risk

Management Committee

Monday 16 June 2025 6pm

**City of Fremantle
Audit and Risk Management Committee - Agenda
16 June 2025**

ARMC2506-2 AUDIT ACTIONS UPDATE - MAY 2025.....2
1.Report 17 Local Government Management of Purchasing Cards2

ARMC2506-4 PURCHASING POLICY EXEMPTIONS MARCH TO MAY 2025....27
1.Purchasing Policy Exemptions March May 202527

ARMC2506-7 FINANCIAL HARDSHIP POLICY30
1.Council Financial Hardship Policy with amendments30

**ARMC2506-8 LOCAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE UPDATE -
JUNE 202535**
1.LEMC Minutes - 24 March 2025.....35
2.Final Exercise Piper Report 2025.....40



Report 17: 2024-25 | 28 May 2025

PERFORMANCE AUDIT

Local Government Management of Purchasing Cards – Larger Metropolitan Entities



**Office of the Auditor General
for Western Australia**

Audit team:

Aloha Morrissey
Ciara Gomez
Sussan Fowler
Else Harris
Manmeet Kaur
Jenna Fuller
Nathan Johnston

National Relay Service TTY: 133 677
(to assist people with hearing and voice impairment)

We can deliver this report in an alternative format for those with visual impairment.

© 2025 Office of the Auditor General Western Australia.
All rights reserved. If acknowledged, this material may be reproduced in whole or in part.

ISSN: 2200-1913 (print)
ISSN: 2200-1921 (online)

The Office of the Auditor General acknowledges the traditional custodians throughout Western Australia and their continuing connection to the land, waters and community. We pay our respects to all members of the Aboriginal communities and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

Image credit: shutterstock.com/Me dia

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN AUDITOR GENERAL'S REPORT

**Local Government Management of
Purchasing Cards – Larger Metropolitan
Entities**

Report 17: 2024-25
28 May 2025

This page is intentionally left blank



**THE PRESIDENT
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL**

**THE SPEAKER
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT OF PURCHASING CARDS – LARGER
METROPOLITAN ENTITIES**

This report has been prepared for submission to Parliament under the provisions of sections 24 and 25 of the *Auditor General Act 2006*.

Performance audits are an integral part of my Office's overall program of audit and assurance for Parliament. They seek to provide Parliament and the people of WA with assessments of the effectiveness and efficiency of public sector programs and activities, and identify opportunities for improved performance.

This audit assessed if six larger metropolitan local government entities effectively manage the issue, use and cancellation of purchasing cards

I wish to acknowledge the entities' staff for their cooperation with this audit.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Caroline Spencer'.

Caroline Spencer
Auditor General
28 May 2025

Contents

- Auditor General's overview 5
- Executive summary 6
 - Introduction 6
 - Background 6
 - Conclusion 8
- Findings 9
 - Controls over the use of purchasing cards were partly effective 9
 - Controls over the issue and cancellation of cards were partly effective and require improvement 13
 - Lack of appropriate oversight of purchasing card controls 13
- Recommendations 15
 - Response from entities 16
- Audit focus and scope 18
- Appendix 1: Better practice guidance 19

Auditor General's overview

This is my Office's second report in two years on local government entities' management of purchasing cards. Purchasing cards are a cost-effective and convenient way to pay for goods and services of low value, but there is a risk of misuse and loss of public money if they are not effectively managed.



This audit reviewed six larger metropolitan entities and had similar findings to our first audit of three regional entities¹. Entities had varying controls in place to manage purchasing cards but did not clearly state what they considered allowable and reasonable business expenditure. In a climate where cost of living is a significant concern, we questioned if some purchases are in line with community expectations of responsible use of public money.

We found no evidence of cards being misused, in part because without clear policies and guidance, we had no benchmark to assess purchases against. However, we share in this report (Case study 1) some of the items of expenditure that appeared excessive when compared with practices in the State sector. Staff should have clear guidance on what is allowable and reasonable, particularly for travel, alcohol, meals, entertainment and gifts.

Entities can also improve their controls over the issue and cancellation of cards, review and approval of purchases and transparent reporting, to give councils and the public confidence that cards are appropriately managed and that purchases meet a business need.

I thank the staff at each audited entity for their cooperation and assistance in completing this audit. I also encourage all local government entities to consider the better practice guidance included in the report to help manage their purchasing cards and minimise the risk of inadvertent or deliberate misuse of public funds.

Our case study examples are de-identified in this report. However, if we audit this topic again, I may name entities to help promote accountability given the recommendations and better practice guidance we have provided the sector.

¹ Office of the Auditor General, [Local Government Management of Purchasing Cards](#), OAG website, 12 June 2024, accessed 1 May 2025.

Executive summary

Introduction

This audit assessed if the following six metropolitan local government entities (entities) effectively manage the issue, use and cancellation of purchasing cards:

- City of Cockburn
- City of Fremantle
- City of Melville
- City of Perth
- City of Subiaco
- Town of Victoria Park.

We previously audited the management of purchasing cards in June 2024 at three regional entities and found inadequate policy guidance for what they considered was allowable and reasonable expenditure, weaknesses in controls over the issue and cancellation of cards, and a lack of effective oversight.²

Both audits considered the requirements of the *Local Government Act 1995* (LG Act) and associated regulations, guidelines issued by the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries and our better practice guidance in Appendix 1.

Background

Purchasing cards are a well-established part of modern purchasing systems and are a cost effective, convenient and timely way to pay for goods and services of low value. Purchasing cards include corporate credit cards, store cards³, fuel cards and taxi cards. This audit focused on credit cards and store cards.

Entities need to demonstrate that purchases meet a legitimate and authorised business need and meet community expectations around the responsible use of public money. Improper, wasteful or unauthorised purchases that are not identified and resolved result in financial loss to the entity.

Effective controls, appropriate to an entity's size and risk, help to prevent and detect inadvertent or deliberate misuse of purchasing cards. These include:

- up-front controls to prevent misuse and errors before a purchase is made. These include clear policies, procedures and guidance, preset card limits and delegations to purchase
- controls to detect errors and misuse after a purchase is made. These include processes to review and approve purchases in a timely way, the monitoring, reporting and oversight of card use and destruction processes.

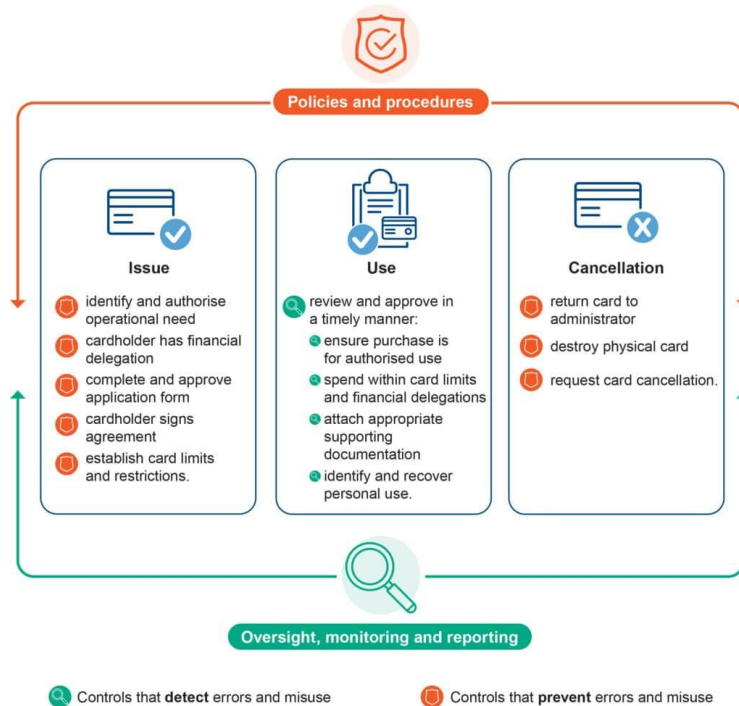
² Office of the Auditor General, [Local Government Management of Purchasing Cards](#), OAG website, 12 June 2024, accessed 1 May 2025.

³ Store cards are a type of credit card that offer a line of credit for use in a specific store or chain of stores such as large supermarket and hardware retailers.

Entities also need to meet their legislated financial responsibilities. The LG Act and associated regulations require:

- entities to develop procedures for the payment of accounts to ensure there is effective security for, and properly authorised use of, purchasing cards⁴
- CEOs to keep proper accounts and records in accordance with regulations⁵
- councils to oversee allocation of their entity’s finances and resources, and determine policies⁶
- entities to present their council with a monthly payment listing of all purchasing card transactions and the list recorded in the council minutes⁷. This provides for increased council and public scrutiny of local government spending.

Figure 1 provides an overview of the key components of purchasing card management, highlighting the controls we assessed during the audit and our better practice guidance (Appendix 1).



Source: OAG

Figure 1: Overview of key components in purchasing card management and controls

⁴ Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996, regulation 11(1)a.

⁵ Local Government Act 1995, section 6.5(a).

⁶ Local Government Act 1995, sections 2.7(2)(a) and (b).

⁷ Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996, regulation 13A took effect from 1 September 2023.

The Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries provides the sector with broad guidance on the management of purchasing cards and changes in legislation through accounting and operational guidelines, circulars, alert bulletins and monthly webinars.

Conclusion

The six entities had varying controls in place to manage the issue, use and cancellation of their purchasing cards, but weak implementation and control gaps meant their controls were only partly effective.

Appropriately, cardholders provided receipts to support their purchases. This control helps entities meet their legislated responsibilities and ratepayers' expectations around the responsible use of public money.

However, we found gaps and weaknesses in all areas of purchasing card management that increase the likelihood of cards being inadvertently or deliberately misused:

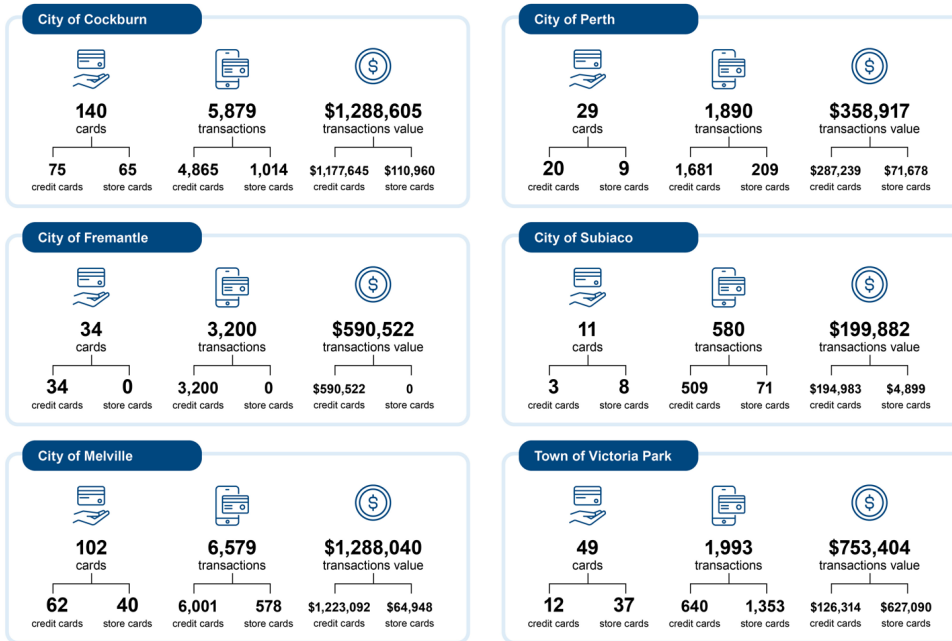
- Policies and guidance for staff did not clearly state what was allowable and reasonable expenditure on such things as travel, accommodation, meals and alcohol. In addition, purchases were not always adequately reviewed and approved in a timely manner.
- The operational need for a purchasing card was not always established; cards were issued to staff who did not have delegated authority to make purchases; cardholder obligations and responsibilities were not made clear; and cards were not promptly returned and destroyed when no longer needed.
- A lack of oversight and monitoring of how well purchasing cards were managed meant entities were missing opportunities to identify and promptly address the risks of card misuse and financial loss.

Although our audit found gaps and weaknesses, our transaction sample testing did not find any evidence that cardholders misused public money, in part because none of the entities had clearly stated for staff what they considered allowable and reasonable business expenditure.

Findings

Controls over the use of purchasing cards were partly effective

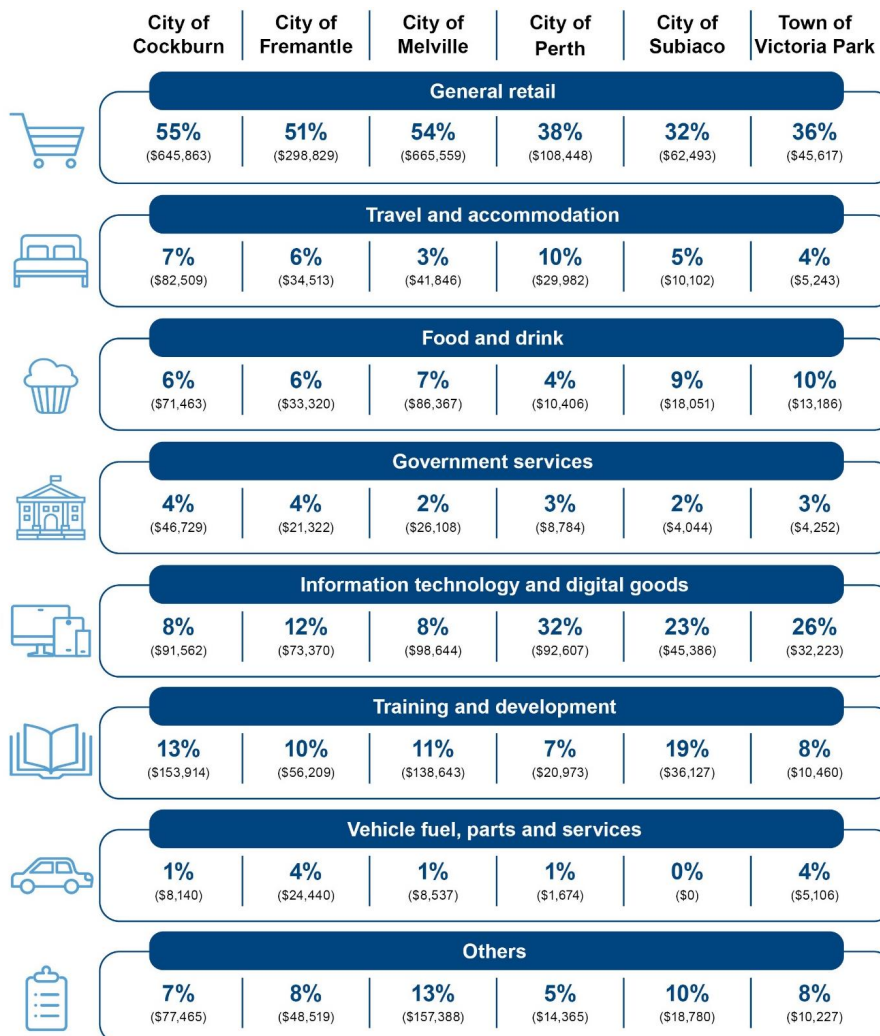
We found cardholders provided receipts or other documentation to support more than 95% of purchases. In total, the six entities had 365 purchasing cards and made purchases totalling around \$4.5 million during our 12-month audit period (Figure 2). Appropriately, purchases were generally for low value items with most transactions valued below \$500.



Source: OAG based on entity information

Figure 2: Key purchasing card statistics from 1 October 2023 to 30 September 2024

Our analysis across all six entities showed credit card purchases generally fell into the range of categories set out in Figure 3.



Source: OAG based on entity information

Note: percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding. We have analysed credit card transaction data only.

Figure 3: Purchase categories for 1 October 2023 to 30 September 2024

Inadequate policies and guidance on allowable and reasonable business use

None of the six entities had clearly stated for staff what was considered allowable and reasonable business expenditure. Entities regularly made purchases for travel, meals, alcohol, entertainment and gifts. Clear policies and guidance are important preventive controls to guide staff decisions when purchasing and reduce instances of unreasonable and excessive spending. The community has a right to expect that public money will be spent carefully and only for legitimate business purposes.

The following case study provides examples of approved purchases that in the absence of clear policies and guidance, we queried if the spending was reasonable.

Case study 1: Reasonableness of business use

Alcohol and meals

- \$1,026 for an elected member and staff dinner after a council meeting, including three bottles of wine at \$70 each. It is the entity's practice to go out to dinner after meetings once a month to support local businesses in the area.
- Four entities have on-site bars. We identified alcohol purchases including:
 - \$990 for wine and spirits
 - \$412 for four cases of wine.
- \$280 for four bottles of champagne to celebrate a major achievement with elected members and staff.
- \$259 for an offsite meeting between the CEO and two senior individuals from key community organisations that included the purchase of a bottle of wine (\$68) and oysters (\$42).

Gifts

- \$86 on three bottles of wine as gifts for partners of three retiring elected members.

Travel

- \$2,489 for a car service to transport 10 people (two elected members, the CEO and seven external delegates) to events over two evenings during an international conference.

We found that none of the entities had documented processes or timeframes to recover money when purchasing cards were used to pay for personal items. Purchasing cards should not be used to purchase personal items under any circumstances, even when the cardholder plans to reimburse the entity. If purchases cannot be clearly split into personal and business components at the time of purchase, a better approach is to pay with a personal account and then seek a reimbursement from the entity for the business component.

Entities need to have processes in place to promptly identify and recover the cost of personal purchases to prevent loss of public money.

Inadequate review and manager approval of purchases

The entities did not always adequately review and approve purchasing card transactions. None of the entities fully complied with their own policy and procedures. We found instances:

- at all entities where purchases were not reviewed and approved within their own specified timeframes or where timeframes were not set. One purchase was not approved for 208 days (City of Fremantle)
- at three entities where pre-approvals were not obtained in line with the entities' requirements for specific items (e.g. alcohol), purchases over a certain value or

permission to use another person's card (City of Fremantle, City of Melville and City of Subiaco)

- at two entities where records did not include required information such as the purpose of providing entertainment or hospitality or the number of employees attending (City of Fremantle and Town of Victoria Park)
- at one entity where not all purchases made by the CEO were approved (City of Victoria Park).

In addition:

- one entity could not provide us with key records for most of their purchases due to a system limitation. We identified this limitation during our audit. These key records included description of purchases, who had approved them and when (City of Victoria Park)
- one entity did not have policies and procedures for who should review and approve store card purchases (City of Cockburn)
- two entities did not specify who should approve CEO purchases (City of Fremantle and City of Subiaco).

To ensure a purchase is allowable and reasonable, a direct manager⁸ who is aware of the cardholder's role and purchasing requirements should conduct a timely review and approve purchases. This reduces the likelihood of unreasonable, inappropriate or unauthorised transactions going undetected.

We also found:

- card sharing taking place. This increases the likelihood of unauthorised or fraudulent purchases and makes it difficult to identify the purchaser (City of Subiaco)
- the collection of personal reward scheme points on a small number of business purchases, and all of them had not been identified nor reported as part of the approval process (City of Cockburn, City of Perth, City of Melville, Town of Victoria Park). A risk exists with reward schemes that cardholders may make purchases through a particular supplier to gain a personal advantage.

The following case study is an example of control weaknesses and delays in approving purchases at one entity.

Case study 2: Control weaknesses to approve purchases

An entity's policies and procedures did not specify a timeframe for credit card purchases to be approved or who should approve purchases made by the CEO.

We found:

- three purchases were not approved until over 125 days after the transactions took place
- the date of approval was not recorded for almost two thirds of the purchases we reviewed. As a result, we could not determine the timeliness of the approval for all credit card purchases

⁸ In the case of the CEO, the chief finance officer (or equivalent) or a suitably senior staff member.

- the CEO and a director approved their own purchases.

Timely and appropriate approval of purchases can detect inadvertent and deliberate misuse and prevent fraudulent use.

Controls over the issue and cancellation of cards were partly effective and require improvement

The six entities' management of the issue and cancellation of purchasing cards was only partly effective. We identified the following control weaknesses:

- all entities' policies and procedures were missing some key elements such as an application process to approve eligibility and need for a card; who should approve a new card; a cardholder agreement form outlining cardholder obligations and responsibilities; and processes to cancel cards
- registers at all entities either did not list all purchasing cards or were missing key information such as acknowledgement of card return and date of card destruction
- no policies or procedures for the issue and cancellation of store cards (City of Cockburn and City of Subiaco)
- purchasing cards were issued to staff who were not recorded in the delegations register as having the required delegated authority to make purchases (City of Cockburn, City of Melville, City of Perth, City of Subiaco)
- all cardholders had not signed agreements acknowledging their legal obligations and responsibilities or had signed the agreement up to seven months after they received their card (Town of Victoria Park)
- delays of between one to eight months to cancel cards when staff exited the entity, including one card that was used to make a purchase 259 days after the staff member exited (City of Cockburn, City of Fremantle, City of Melville, Town of Victoria Park).

There is an increased likelihood of inadvertent or deliberate misuse and financial loss to entities when cards are not appropriately issued and cancelled.

Lack of appropriate oversight of purchasing card controls

Three entities did not meet legislative requirements to provide council with a list of all purchases. We found:

- reporting of store card purchases did not include the payees name, date and sufficient details to identify each payment (City of Melville and City of Subiaco)
- individual reporting of store card purchases did not start until April 2024 even though it was required from September 2023 (Town of Victoria Park).

All entities had instances where they provided council with vague descriptions of purchases and could have better identified the expenditure to facilitate transparency and proper scrutiny of how public money is being spent.

None of the entities had appropriate management oversight of purchasing card control effectiveness. None routinely monitored controls to issue, use and cancel cards and report on shortcomings to management. Regular monitoring activities, like those described in our better practice guide in Appendix 1, would assist entities to identify control gaps and address

weaknesses in a timely manner. All entities reviewed their financial management systems and procedures as required by legislation⁹ but not all of the reviews included a review of purchasing card procedures. One entity had conducted a one-off internal audit of their purchasing card control effectiveness which was finalised during our audit (City of Cockburn).

⁹ Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996, regulation 5(2)c.

Recommendations

1. The six entities should ensure their policy and guidance is clear on what is allowable and reasonable business use expenditure for items such as travel, alcohol, meals, entertainment and gifts.
2. The six entities, as relevant, should:
 - a. report purchasing card transactions more transparently to council to enable better scrutiny of how public money is being spent
 - b. have suitable controls in place to manage the issue and timely cancellation of purchasing cards
 - c. review and approve purchasing card transactions in a timely manner
 - d. keep proper records of the review and approvals of purchasing card transactions and card cancellations
 - e. regularly monitor and report on purchasing card controls to allow management to oversee usage and control effectiveness. The results of reviews should be documented and retained.

In accordance with section 7.12A of the *Local Government Act 1995*, the six entities should prepare a report on any matters identified as significant to them for submission to the Minister for Local Government within three months of this report being tabled in Parliament, and within 14 days of submission publish it on their website.

Response from entities

City of Cockburn

The City thanks the Office of the Auditor General for the conduct of this performance audit.

The findings of the Office of the Auditor General's performance audit align with the findings of a separate credit and purchasing card internal audit that the City had performed in 2024/25. The City values the insight the Office of the Auditor General has provided. The community must be confident that the City has appropriate controls in place for purchasing cards and guidance for their use by the City. This includes setting expectations on reasonable business use for expenditure for items such as travel, alcohol, meals, entertainment and gifts to staff.

The Office of the Auditor General has previously highlighted the need for local governments to provide policy guidance on reasonable business use. As a result, when Council considered the Civic Hospitality and Gifts Policy at the 13 May 2025 Council meeting, it resolved to "REQUEST a further report to be presented to the June 2025 Governance Committee meeting to respond to the Office of Auditor General's guidance on the need to develop clear policy guidance for employees and Elected Members on what is allowable and reasonable business expenditure on meals, entertainment and hospitality."

The City will implement the findings of this Office of the Auditor General Performance Audit and report on them to the Minister for Local Government as well as to the City's Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee, and Council.

City of Fremantle

The City of Fremantle acknowledges and accepts the audit's recommendations. The City of Fremantle remains committed to ongoing improvement and will take steps to strengthen its practices and ensure transparency, accountability and continued responsible use of public resources.

City of Melville

The City of Melville acknowledges the findings from the performance audit into purchasing card management and is committed to strengthening governance, compliance, and oversight. While the audit did not find evidence that cardholders misused public money, the City recognises the importance of continuous improvement in the management of its purchasing cards. Implementation of recommendations has commenced ensuring alignment with better practice principles.

City of Perth

The City of Perth is committed to continuous improvement and feedback, and has welcomed the opportunity to participate in the OAG's purchasing cards performance audit.

Contextually, purchasing cards account for less than 0.1% of the City's total expenditure.

In 2020, following the conclusion of the most complex Inquiry into a local government in Western Australia, the City embarked upon an 'Evolution to Excellence' to address all 215 Inquiry recommendations assigned to the City.

In 2024, the City concluded this significant body of work and provided the State Government (through the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries) comprehensive evidence to substantiate its completion of each of the 215 recommendations. The City's response was achieved through strong leadership, clear

direction and commitment to address the governance and operational issues identified through the Inquiry. As a result of these efforts, the City has strengthened its internal governance, operations and financial management.

The City has established a high calibre Audit and Risk Committee, with independent membership, to oversight the operations and performance of the City.

The City considers all opportunities for improvement as a means of further strengthening its processes and systems and importantly ensuring value for its rate payers.

The City has established a range of policies and guidance (8 in total) for staff and elected members on what is allowable and reasonable business use expenditure for items such as travel, alcohol, meals, entertainment and gifts. On this basis, the City does not agree with recommendation one within this report.

City of Subiaco

The City of Subiaco embraces continuous improvement and welcomes opportunities to improve our processes in accordance with the OAG's recommendations. The City considers the risk associated with usage of its credit cards to be low, given that there are only two credit cards, that they are only used for purchases that cannot be made by other mechanisms, and that they have low limits. Total monthly expenditure ranges between \$10k and \$20k, with expenditures typically comprising IT subscriptions, sundry items for community events, staff training and memberships, and catering for council meetings and workshops held after hours.

There are also strong controls in place given that every purchasing card transaction is scrutinized by the Finance team, the Director Corporate Services, and is reported to Council Meetings each month for the further scrutiny of every elected member and the general public. This is a much higher bar of transparency than provided by state government agencies. General staff using the two shared credit cards do not have access to the card details, and can only make payments following a supervisor's authorisation, providing a 'gate' control which arguably reduces the risk compared to organisations that allocate cards to every staff member with a purchasing need. All purchases are made in accordance with budgetary constraints and are subject to the same Purchasing policy and protocols as every other transaction in the City.

Town of Victoria Park

The Town of Victoria Park acknowledges the overall findings and recommendations by the OAG in the performance audit. The Town has already started the process of reviewing its current Policy, Management Practice, Procedure and Transaction Card Agreement, around the use and management of purchase cards. This will take into consideration the recommendations included in these findings, operational guidelines provided by the DLGSC, better practice guidance provided by the OAG and legislative requirements. This will then be communicated to all cardholders and monitored by the Town's card administrators for its effectiveness moving forwards. The Town would like to note that the performance audit did not find any evidence of fraud or that the Town's cardholders misused public money.

Audit focus and scope

The objective of this audit was to assess if six local government entities effectively manage the issue, use and cancellation of purchasing cards. The criteria were:

- Are there effective controls over the issue and cancellation of purchasing cards?
- Are there effective controls over the use of purchasing cards?

The audit reviewed the issue, use and cancellation practices of each entity over the period 1 October 2023 to 30 September 2024.



We assessed each entity's policies and procedures against legislative requirements, the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries' operational guidelines and our better practice guidance in Appendix 1. At each entity, we also assessed a sample of CEO purchasing card transactions and whether there was adequate independent review.

This was an independent performance audit, conducted under section 18 of the *Auditor General Act 2006*, in accordance with Australian Standard on Assurance Engagements ASAE 3500 *Performance Engagements*. We complied with the independence and other ethical requirements related to assurance engagements. Performance audits focus primarily on the effective management and operations of entity programs and activities. The approximate cost of undertaking the audit and reporting was \$415,000.



Appendix 1: Better practice guidance

Local government entities need to have purchasing card policies and procedures that are up-to-date and accessible to staff. These policies and procedures should include key controls for the issue, use and cancellation of purchasing cards and be regularly reviewed.

The table lists requirements for effective purchasing card management, which guided our audit. It is not intended to be an exhaustive list.

Purchasing card management	Outcome	What we expect to see
 <p>Issue</p>	<p>Cardholder eligibility and operational need is established, an application is appropriately approved and the cardholder is made aware of their legal obligations and responsibilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cardholder has appropriate financial delegation to incur expenditure. Delegations should also be set for certain types of expenditure • an application form is appropriately approved • card limits are based on cardholders need • cardholder and their manager sign an agreement that clearly sets out the legal obligations and responsibilities and the purposes for which a card may or may not be used • cardholder acknowledges that they understand and will comply with purchasing card policy and procedures • cardholder receives training on procedures and requirements • card administrator updates the purchasing card register with key cardholder information.
 <p>Use</p>	<p>Purchases are for business use and are properly reviewed and approved in accordance with the purchasing card policies and procedures</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • purchases should be within the transaction and card limits. They should not be split to circumvent these limits • entity sets out appropriate delegations for approval of expenditure • timely review and approval of transactions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>cardholder</u>: reviews statements to ensure accuracy of reported purchases, attaches adequate supporting documentation, codes purchases and provides sufficient details to identify the purchase ○ <u>cardholder's direct manager</u>¹⁰: reviews and approves purchases to ensure appropriate business use, consistency with cardholder's role and responsibilities, and compliance with policies and guidelines

¹⁰ In the case of the CEO, the chief finance officer (or equivalent) or a suitably senior staff member.

Purchasing card management	Outcome	What we expect to see
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review and approval processes have adequate documentation • processes to repay any personal purchases • guidance for purchases where cards are not physically present such as online telephone and internet purchases • treatment of reward schemes and loyalty programs as purchasing cards should not be used to gain a personal benefit • procedures for when a cardholder is on leave to ensure card security.
 <p>Cancellation</p>	<p>Timely cancellation of purchasing cards to prevent unauthorised purchases and unnecessary card fees</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • immediate cancellation once a cardholder exits or has a change in employment requirements • cardholder returns card to the administrator • cards should be destroyed, and evidence of destruction recorded • administrator enters cancellation and destruction information in cardholder register.
 <p>Oversight</p>	<p>Regular monitoring and reporting to provide management with insights into use and the effectiveness of controls and to address shortcomings in a timely manner</p> <p>Evidence of reviews should be retained</p>	<p>Examples of monitoring and reporting include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuously: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ disclose information about each purchasing card transaction in a payment listing to council and in council minutes ○ record instances of personal use, inappropriate use, and disputed and fraudulent transactions. Take corrective action when required ○ assess the timeliness of reviews and approvals by cardholders and managers, and act when timeframes are not met ○ provide reports to managers on usage within their areas to assess operational need ○ reinforce requirements to cardholders and approvers • Annually: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ identify inactive or underused cards that may require cancellation ○ review appropriateness of transaction and card limits ○ audit and update purchasing card registers ○ review relevance and effectiveness of policies and procedures as part of an annual risk assessment

Purchasing card management	Outcome	What we expect to see
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Periodically: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ sample test transactions for appropriate business use and compliance with policies and procedures ○ analyse usage and supplier patterns to inform procurement practices ○ review purchasing card policy against operational guidelines and better practice principles ○ review the appropriateness and effectiveness of financial management systems and procedures as required by legislation.

Source: OAG

Auditor General's 2024-25 reports

Number	Title	Date tabled
17	Local Government Management of Purchasing Cards – Larger Metropolitan Entities	28 May 2025
16	Fraud Risks in Land Transactions by DevelopmentWA	28 May 2025
15	Electricity Generation and Retail Corporation (Synergy)	30 April 2025
14	State Government 2023-24 – Information Systems Audit Results	30 April 2025
13	State Government 2023-24 – Financial Audit Results	30 April 2025
12	Local Government 2023-24 – Financial Audit Results	24 April 2025
11	Local Government 2023-24 – Information Systems Audit Results	11 April 2025
10	Fraud Risks in the WA Greyhound Racing Association	11 April 2025
9	Child Protection Case Management System – Assist	21 March 2025
8	Universities and TAFEs 2023 – Financial Audit Results	5 December 2024
7	WA Student Assistance Payment – Controls Review	27 November 2024
6	Provision of Additional Information to the Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations – Opinions on Ministerial Notifications	22 November 2024
5	Implementation of the Aboriginal Procurement Policy	21 November 2024
4	Quality and Utilisation of Emergency Department Data	20 November 2024
3	Management of State Agreements	30 October 2024
2	Legislative Reform Priorities and Timeframes – Opinion on Ministerial Notification	19 August 2024
1	Supplier Master Files – Better Practice Guide	1 August 2024

**Office of the Auditor General
for Western Australia**

7th Floor Albert Facey House
469 Wellington Street, Perth

T: 08 6557 7500
E: info@audit.wa.gov.au

www.audit.wa.gov.au



@OAG_WA



Office of the Auditor General
for Western Australia

PURCHASING POLICY EXEMPTIONS

POLICY EXEMPTION	TYPE OF EXEMPTION	SUPPLIER	REASON FOR EXEMPTION	LENGTH OF CONTRACT	TOTAL VALUE	DATE APPROVED	APPROVING AUTHORITY
\$2,000-\$9,999 Request 2 Quotes Min. 1 written quote rec'd	Purchasing Policy Exemption Request for Artists	Lucy Gibson	Lucy Gibson has previously completed similar work for high profile and successful events like Highway to Hell. Lucy has both strong communication and planning skills and positive and deep relationships with local arts organizations and the Fremantle wider community. This combination makes her a particularly wise choice for this project. Her skills, experience and track record prove her effectiveness.	One-Off	\$2,660.00	04/03/2025	Director Creative Arts and Community

Total Exemptions: \$2,000-\$9,999

\$ 2,660.00

POLICY EXEMPTION	TYPE OF EXEMPTION	SUPPLIER	REASON FOR EXEMPTION	LENGTH OF CONTRACT	TOTAL VALUE	DATE APPROVED	APPROVING AUTHORITY
\$10,000-\$49,999 Request 3 Quotes Min. 2 written quotes rec'd	Specialist Consultant Advice	UDLA	An exemption for purchasing thresholds on the basis of Specialist Consulting Advice, as per Purchasing Policy, to extend the engagement of UDLA. The reason for this request is that it was determined in meeting 1 with UDLA (dated 16 December 2024) that Aboriginal Elders would be needed to consult on the Project. This will build on the foundational work undertaken to date with the Elders in the development of the masterplan. We will collaborate and identify existing cultural narratives values and understandings derived from readings of Country, to further develop cultural opportunities for the park that will be implemented in the construction phase. This particularly pertains to the Cultural Shelter and the Art/Wayfinding pieces.	12 Months	\$23,296.00	10/03/2025	Director Infrastructure
\$10,000-\$49,999 Request 3 Quotes Min. 2 written quotes rec'd	Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM)	The Frenchams Group	The Frenchams Group have provided the Indoor Greenery at the Walyalup Civic Centre since inception - November 2021. The annual cost is approximately \$11,000 and in accordance with the Purchasing Policy, 3 quotes were requested annually and Frenchams have been awarded as they continually provided the lowest price and best value. 88 established plants are located throughout WCC in assorted pots and planter boxes. We have been fortunate that Frenchams have continued to provide best value as to swap out the indoor greenery on an annual basis would cause significant disruption. The other added benefit of Frenchams being the sole Indoor Greenery contractor since inception is that the plants have had 3 and a half years to grow and establish, this would be difficult to achieve and maintain if the plant schedule was swapped out by different contractors on an annual basis. For these reasons we are seeking approval to award the Frenchams Group with a 2 year contract with a one year extension option, on the basis that an annual competitive process has been undertaken annually since 2021.	36 Months	\$11,500.00	02/04/2025	Director Infrastructure
\$10,000-\$49,999 Request 3 Quotes Min. 2 written quotes rec'd	Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM)	Clark Agencies	Both the consultant and contractor involved with the design and installation of the natural ventilation louvres are no longer trading. There are a limited number of known contractors in WA that specialize in this equipment which is integral to the HVAC system of WCC. We have found two contractors in Perth who specialize in the installation and maintenance of natural ventilation louvers. Oasis Electrical & Clark Agencies. Oasis Electrical, who have previously undertaken works at the City, have not supplied a quote for the latest required works despite multiple requests since November 2024. Clark Agencies attended site and provided a quote in October 2024.	One Off	\$11,500.00	04/04/2025	Director Infrastructure

\$10,000-\$49,999 Request 3 Quotes Min. 2 written quotes rec'd	Sole Source of Supply	Cappfinity Pty Ltd	Online access to strengths profile assessments for individuals, leaders and teams to enable the Strengths Program 2025. Cappfinity is the only supplier of this particular product. Purchasing direct through the supplier vs online or through a third party has attracted a 69% discount. Moderate positive risk against performance of the organisation in the short to medium term. Utilising a competent and capable supplier who are world leaders in strengths profiling based on over 20 years of research and development.	One-Off	\$13,060.00	07/04/2025	CEO
\$10,000-\$49,999 Request 3 Quotes Min. 2 written quotes rec'd	Sole Source of Supply	UPG (AUST) Pty Ltd	Sole supplier is required as: 1. The Trimble survey equipment is the only equipment type capable of fulfilling City requirements (data interface and single operator capability). 2. There is only one supplier in WA for the Trimble product. Details: We reached out to three different suppliers to request quotes for the product. All of them redirected us to UPG, which is the sole supplier for this product. A Sole Supplier Letter from UPG is attached for reference.	One-Off	\$49,429.00	11/04/2025	CEO
\$10,000-\$49,999 Request 3 Quotes Min. 2 written quotes rec'd	Specialist Consultant Advice	Inhabit Group	The Facade Contractor for the WCC ,(JLM) went into liquidation during the build and upon recommendation from Kerry Hill Architects, we subsequently engaged with the Inhabit Group to provide a WCC Facade O & M manual. Inhabit Group collaborated with Sirona and Kerry Hill Architects on the facade design and have detailed specifications, knowledge and design of the WCC Facade. Leveraging off this experience, we would like to further engage with the Inhabit Group to undertake a WCC Facade audit.	3 Months	\$22,000.00	15/04/2025	Director Infrastructure
\$10,000-\$49,999 Request 3 Quotes Min. 2 written quotes rec'd	Specialist Consultant Advice	The Customer Connection	Attempts were made to secure quotes. The City of Fremantle requires specialized consultant expertise for a comprehensive customer service audit. The Customer Connection/Ken Gray can offer a uniquely helpful perspective, both because of Ken's ongoing work monitoring the City of Fremantle's customer service, and because of his over 20 years of experience working with Australian Local Government bodies. Ken's methodology includes diagnostic tools specifically designed for Local Government assessment, benchmark data from comparable Perth and WA councils, and a proven implementation framework. This specialized knowledge cannot be readily sourced through standard procurement.	6 Months	\$35,000.00	15/04/2025	Director Creative Arts and Community
\$10,000-\$49,999 Request 3 Quotes Min. 2 written quotes rec'd	Specialist Consultant Advice	Jackson McDonald	Jackson McDonald specialise in providing legal services to Local Government have provided advice for the City of Fremantle previously. The City now requires legal advice to mitigate risk and conduct workshops prior to developing the business case for the Fremantle Oval Redevelopment. There are limited legal practices providing an extensive range of services specialising in Local Government. Jackson McDonald have an extensive background in working with Local Governments in Western Australia and have a trusted working relationship with the City of Fremantle.	6 Months	\$30,000.00	15/05/2025	Director Infrastructure
\$10,000-\$49,999 Request 3 Quotes Min. 2 written quotes rec'd	Specialist Consultant Advice	Hushtec Solutions	Hushtec Solutions is a specialist firm in both acoustic advice, fabrication and installation of acoustic material. They are being engaged on behalf of the City to provide specialist advice and a possible solution to resolve a live music venue noise concern . Advice has been sought from a local Acoustic consultant and Hushtec have been recommended as a firm capable of delivering the desired result in relation to providing advice and possible engineered solutions for acoustic treatment to live music venues	One-Off	\$13,400.00	21/05/2025	Director Planning, Place and Urban Development
\$10,000-\$49,999 Request 3 Quotes Min. 2 written quotes rec'd	Specialist Consultant Advice	Officer Wood	The Depot Redevelopment project has reached a stage in planning and business case development that requires additional consultancy support. Officer Wood was previously engaged on the early project planning in 2023 and the project team recommends re-engagement to support the business plan and further develop their previous concepts to align with the revised schedule of accommodations and functional inclusions, provide a consolidated summary of relevant documents to support the development of the architectural brief for future design engagement.	6 Months	\$20,000.00	23/05/2025	Director Infrastructure

			Officer Wood is a specialist architectural consultant with previous experience and substantially progressed documentation pertaining to this project, this is an exemption to re-engage and continue these works.				
--	--	--	---	--	--	--	--

Total Exemptions: \$10,000-\$49,999

\$229,185.00

POLICY EXEMPTION	TYPE OF EXEMPTION	SUPPLIER	REASON FOR EXEMPTION	LENGTH OF CONTRACT	TOTAL VALUE	DATE APPROVED	APPROVING AUTHORITY
\$50,000-\$249,999 Request 3 Quotes Min. 2 written quotes rec'd	Fixed Cost Purchase - Subscription	Civica Pty Ltd	Civica Pty Ltd are the current provider of the City's Library Management System (LMS). This software, known as Spydus, has been used at the City for more than 5 years and all library staff and patrons are well trained in how this software operates. The existing 3 year license agreement ends 13 July 2025. The City wishes to renew this software license for a further 3 years at a fixed cost subscription. This is a license only renewal and is only able to be renewed through Civica as they have no resellers. Going to market for a replacement LMS would generate additional resource costs as well as impact all library patrons and staff as they would need to be trained to use different software.	36 Months	67,627.00	24/03/2025	Director City Business

Total Exemptions: \$50,000-\$249,999

\$67,627.00



Council Policy

Financial Hardship

fremantle.wa.gov.au



Financial Hardship

Policy scope

Council acknowledges that due to exceptional circumstances ratepayers and debtors may at times encounter difficulty in paying rates and services charges as they fall due.

This Policy is intended to ensure that the City offers fair, equitable, consistent and dignified support to ratepayers and debtors suffering financial hardship, while treating all members of the community with respect and understanding during times of difficulty.

Policy statement

This policy applies to ratepayers and debtors who are experiencing genuine financial hardship where the ratepayer or debtor is willing but unable to pay their rates-debt due to unforeseen and unexpected events. It applies to all outstanding rates and service charges as at the date of adoption of this policy.

Note this policy is not for a write off of debt. It is assistance for financial hardship only. Full Rates and charges are still required to be paid.

It is a reasonable community expectation that those with the capacity to pay rates will continue to do so. For this reasonreason, the Policy is not intended to provide rate relief to ratepayers or debtors who are not able to evidence financial hardship. In which case the ordinary statutory provisions of the *Local Government Act 1995 and Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996* will apply.

1. Payment difficulties, hardship and vulnerability

1.1 Financial hardship occurs where a person is unable to pay rates and serviceor charges without affecting their ability to meet their basic living needs, or the basic living needs of their dependants. This policy is intended to apply to all debtors or ratepayers (excluding fully entitled pensioners who are eligible to defer rates) experiencing financial hardship regardless of their status, property owners, tenants or business owners alike.

Anticipated Financial Hardship due to COVID19

1.1 The City recognises that many ratepayers are already experiencing financial hardship due to COVID-19, and anticipate that additional financial difficulties may arise when their rates are received.

2. Financial Hardship Criteria

2.1 While evidence of hardship will be required, the City acknowledge that not all circumstances are alike and will take a flexible approach to a range of individual situations including, but not limited to:

- Recent unemployment or under-employment
- Sickness or recovery from sickness
- Low income or loss of income
- Family and Domestic violence



- Unforeseen circumstances such as caring for and supporting extended family
- 2.2 Ratepayers or debtors are encouraged to provide any information about their individual circumstances that may be relevant for assessment. This may include demonstrating a capacity to make some payment and where possible, entering into a payment proposal.
- 2.3 The City will consider all circumstances, applying the principles of fairness, integrity and confidentiality whilst complying with its statutory responsibilities.
- 2.4 The City will provide assistance subject to the following conditions:
 - In the opinion of the Chief Executive Officer- the ratepayer or debtor is experiencing genuine financial hardship
 - The ratepayer or debtor's circumstances can be substantiated upon request
 - The ratepayer or debtor is not bankrupt or subject to a bankruptcy petition

For Rates assistance:

 - The principal place of residence or the principal place of business of the ratepayer
 - The applicant must be the owner or co-owner of the property and legally liable for payment of rates and charges
- 3. Application Process**
- 3.1 To apply for consideration of financial hardship assistance, the ratepayer or debtor is required to submit a Financial Hardship Application form for assessment. Third party documentation may be requested to assist in determining applications for financial hardship.
- 4. Review**
- 4.1 The City will establish a mechanism for review of decisions made under this policy. Applications will be assessed by applying principles of fairness, equity, consistency and confidentiality. The City will exercise due diligence in assessing and identify genuine hardship based on the circumstances of each ratepayersratepayer or debtor's situation.
- 4.2 Applicants will be advised of the decision within the City's Customer Service Charter adopted timeframes.
- 5. Assistance**
- 5.1 When ratepayers are determined to be in Financial Hardship the City will offer on a case-by case basis to:
 - Temporarily accept reduced payments and establish an alternative payment arrangement plan
 - Temporarily pause payment of rates, administration fees and charges
 - Cease any penalty interest for up to 6 months
 - Suspend any debt recovery action subject to adherence with agreed payment arrangement plan



6. Payment Arrangements for Rates and Service Charges

6.1 Payment arrangements facilitated in accordance with Section 6.49 of the *Act/Local Government Act 1995* are of an agreed frequency and amount. These arrangements will consider the following:

- That a ratepayer has made genuine effort to meet rate and service charge obligations in the past;
- The payment arrangement will establish a known end date that is realistic and achievable;
- The ratepayer will be responsible for informing the City of any change in circumstance that jeopardises the agreed payment schedule.

6.2 In the case of severe financial hardship, the City reserves the right to consider waiving additional charges or interest (excluding the late payment interest applicable to the Emergency Services Levy).

7. Interest Charges

7.1 A ratepayer that meets the Financial Hardship Criteria and enters into a payment arrangement may request a suspension or waiver of interest charges for up to 6 months, reviewed quarterly. Applications will be assessed on a case by case basis.

8. Debt Recovery

8.1 The City will suspend its debt recovery processes whilst negotiating a suitable payment arrangement with a ratepayer. Where the ratepayer is unable to adhere to the agreed payment plan and advises the City in advance of default, a revised plan will be considered.

8.2 Where a ratepayer has not reasonably adhered to the agreed payment plan and there are Rates and Service Charge debts that remain outstanding, the City will offer one further opportunity at a payment plan that will clear the total debt by the end of the current financial year.

8.3 Rates and service charge debts that remain outstanding at the end of the financial year will be subject to the rates debt recovery procedures prescribed in the *Local Government Act 1995*.

9. Communication and Confidentiality

9.1 Communication will remain confidential at all times and the City will undertake to communicate with a nominated support person or other third party upon written request.

9.2 Ratepayers will be advised of this policy and its application upon contacting the City in relation to outstanding rates or service charge debt.

9.3 The City recognises that applicants for hardship consideration are experiencing additional stress and may have complex needs.

9.3 The City will provide additional time to respond to communication sent by the City and will communicate in alternative formats where appropriate.



Definitions and abbreviations

Nil.

Responsibility and review information	
Responsible officer:	Manager Financial Services
Document adoption/approval details	8 July 2020 – Ordinary Meeting of Council - SC2007-1
Document amendment details	16 June 2025
Next review date	8 July 2024 - 2029

MINUTES

Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC)

Monday, 24 March 2025, 9.00am



LOCAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES

DECLARATION OF OPENING / ANNOUNCEMENT OF VISITORS

1.0 OPENING OF MEETING

9.10am

NYOONGAR ACKNOWLEDGEMENT STATEMENT

2.0 ATTENDANCE & APOLOGIES

2.1 Attendance

Mark Donnelly – Manager Field Services City of Fremantle (Committee Chair)
Cr Geoff Graham – City of Fremantle, Councillor
Jarrad Duggan – Team Leader Community Safety & Parking City of Fremantle
Kenan Bender – Senior Environmental Health Officer City of Fremantle
Aaron Dolin – City of Fremantle
Bindiya Shah – City of Fremantle
Vikki Barlow - Manager Community Development – City of Fremantle
Courtney Owston – City of Fremantle
Matthew Cantrell – City Of Fremantle
Jonathan Throssell – Chief Executive Officer – Town of East Fremantle
Jaqueline Scott – Executive Manager Technical Services- Town of East Fremantle
Megan Sargent – Senior Environmental Health Officer, Town of East Fremantle
Sarah Romaniello– Senior Environmental Health Officer, Town of East Fremantle
Natasha Turfrey – Communications and Engagement Officer
Rebecca Dreverman – Fremantle Ports
Savio Fernandes – Fremantle Ports
Kirrily Clarke – Department of Communities
Anthony Nemeth – Department of Communities
Donna Morgan – DFES
Troy Stubberfield – DFES
Michele Oswald – DPIRD
Liam Plant – DPIRD
Darren Davy – WA Police
Mitchell Baker – WA Police
Helen Barrett Fiona Stanley and Fremantle Hospital
Tom Robinson – Water Corp

2.2 APOLOGIES

Thor Elliott – Fremantle Port Authority
Ben Cole – Fremantle Port Authority
Nadia O'Maly – Town of East Fremantle
Fraser Henderson – Town of East Fremantle
Cate Willey – DEFS
Cr Jemima Williamson-Wong – City of Fremantle
Mike Hayward – Department of Health
Katie Aviles – St Johns WA
Brad Karafil – WA Police
Glen Dougall- City of Fremantle
Russell Kingdom- City of Fremantle

3.0 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Nil

4.0 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Minutes of the previous City of Fremantle and Town of East Fremantle Local Emergency Management Committee meeting on the 24th September 2024 were:

Moved by: Sarah Romaniello
Seconded By : Jarrad Duggan

5.0 PRESENTATIONS/EXERCISE

- 5.1 Joint Recovery Management Exercise
John Lane – Consultant John Lane Emergency Management Services
(Exercise undertake at conclusion of LEMC)

Exercise Overview - "Exercise Piper" was presented by consultant John Lane. It was a **recovery planning exercise** based upon a Level 2 air crash emergency, designed to increase awareness and understanding of emergency management roles of key local government staff and supporting agency personnel likely to have a **recovery role** in an emergency.

See Exercise Paper attached to minutes.

6.0 REVIEW OF LEMC MEMBERSHIP AND CONTACT LIST UPDATES

- No further changes required to LEMA Appendix 6 – Emergency Contact Register
- CEO of Town of East Fremantle introduced Jacqueline Scott, Executive Manager Technical Services

7.0 LOCAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT (STANDING ITEMS)

- 7.1 Incident Reports – Current QFly Incident - Nil to report
- 7.2 Post Exercise Reports – Report to be compiled following today's meeting
- 7.3 Review Local Emergency Management Arrangements – Review has commenced
- 7.4 LEMC Reporting – To be completed July 2025

8.0 AGENDA ITEMS

8.1 Local Emergency Relief and Support Plan (LERSP)

Kirrily Clarke – Regional Coordinator South Metro –
Regional Preparedness and Coordination | Emergency Relief and
Support
Department of Communities

Kirrily Clarke discussed the revised plan, ask for feedback from the committee – to which there was none and requested the chair to endorse the plan.

Plan Endorsed by: Troy Stubberfield – DFES

9.0 GENERAL BUSINESS

9.1 Troy Stubberfield – DFES

Troy asked if anyone had a contact for Leeuwin Base in East Fremantle. Sarah Romaniello and Mark Donnelly to follow up and get back to Troy.

9.2 Donna Morgan – DEFS

Donna advised that the Department of Fire and Emergency Services has recently undertaken a significant comprehensive review of the

recovery arrangements in the State Emergency Management Framework.

Proposed amendments to the state-level recovery arrangements, focused on clarifying roles, responsibilities and coordination arrangements, are now available for comment until Friday 2 May 2025.

Committee members shall follow the below consultation link to review the proposed arrangements and learn more about the comprehensive review:

State Recovery Arrangements Consultation

10.0 NEXT MEETING

DATE	ACTIVITY	VENUE	COMMENT
11/06/2025 @1.30pm	Meeting and Presentation	Town of East Fremantle	Presentation TBC – Possibly heat related

11.0 MEETING CLOSURE

Meeting closed at 9:18am



**A Joint Emergency Recovery Exercise for the City of
Fremantle and the Town of East Fremantle LEMC**



City of Fremantle and Town of East Fremantle LEMC Joint Recovery Exercise 2025

Intentionally blank

City of Fremantle and Town of East Fremantle LEMC Joint Recovery Exercise 2025

Contents

Executive Summary.....4
Exercise Planning.....4
Capability Areas of Focus.....5
Exercise Date and Location.....5
Joint Local Emergency Management Committee Meeting6
Exercise Scenario.....6
General Idea.....6
Special Ideas6
Exercise Format.....7
Exercise Simulation Stages.....8
Exercise Master Schedule.....9
Exercise objectives.....10
Exercise Feedback and Ideas for Improvement.....11
Exercise attendance.....11
Summary of Outcomes.....12
 Table of Lessons Identified12
DFES Feedback.....14
 Assessor's General Comments:.....14
 Other Comments Raised for Consideration:.....15
Conclusion.....15
APPENDIX A: Exercise Participants.....17
Allocated Exercise Roles.....18
APPENDIX B: Exercise Participant Feedback Summary.....20

City of Fremantle and Town of East Fremantle LEMC Joint Recovery Exercise 2025

Executive Summary

Western Australia's Emergency Management Act 2005 and the State Emergency Management Policy 2.5, requires all Local Government Emergency Management Committee's (LEMC) to conduct an emergency exercise every twelve months.

The City of Fremantle and Town of East Fremantle Local Emergency Management Committee engaged John Lane Emergency Management Services to plan and facilitate a local recovery exercise. This exercise was intended to provide staff members from both local governments and government agencies an opportunity to practice recovery activities through discussion and personal interaction.

Joint exercises allow local governments to assess their recovery capabilities and maintain communication with neighbouring partners. Starting with a real-time Incident Support Group (ISG) highlighted the transition from response to recovery.

Exercise Planning

The exercise facilitator was approached four weeks before the event, leaving limited time for interaction with agencies and local government staff. Earlier engagement would have benefited lead agencies due to the complexity of the exercise. Planning was done via email and phone calls with key personnel followed by one face-to-face planning meeting. Despite the short preparation period, the exercise was conducted efficiently with minor adjustments needed during facilitation. The event provided valuable learning for LEMC members and local government staff, many of whom were inexperienced in emergency management.

City of Fremantle and Town of East Fremantle LEMC Joint Recovery Exercise 2025

Capability Areas of Focus

Capability Area	Core Capability	Achievement Objective
Governance	Emergency Management Plans	Exercise Local Recovery Plans
Emergency Response	Command and Control Coordination	Provide Local government personnel with exposure to the ISG process
Intj5l,t6, 6pact Management & Recovery Coordination	Recovery Coordination	Build an awareness and understanding of the Local Recovery Coordination Group roles and responsibilities
Community Involvement	Public Information	Discussion facilitated through communications joint recovery subcommittee. Practice recovery management planning via combined local government Local Recovery Coordinating Group (LRCG) meeting(s); Set up all four Recovery Sub-Committees and practise operational recovery planning.

Exercise Date and Location

Exercise 'Piper' was conducted at the City of Fremantle Chambers on Tuesday 24 March 2025, from 0930 hrs to 1230 hrs`.

City of Fremantle and Town of East Fremantle LEMC Joint Recovery Exercise 2025

Joint Local Emergency Management Committee Meeting

Prior to the exercise, the City of Fremantle and the Town of East Fremantle held their scheduled joint LEMC meeting as a precursor to the joint recovery exercise.

Exercise Scenario

General Idea

The City of Fremantle, located approximately 18 kilometres southwest of the Perth CBD, is currently home to 30,883 people (ABS 2014) and includes the suburbs of Beaconsfield, Fremantle, Hilton, North Fremantle, O'Connor, Samson, South Fremantle and White Gum Valley.

Bounded by the Swan River and the Indian Ocean, Fremantle is widely regarded as Perth's second city. Fremantle's unique character is captured by its landscape, heritage architecture, music, arts, culture, festivals, retail stores, markets, cafés and restaurants, which all contribute to its village-style atmosphere.

Rottnest Island, a popular tourist destination lies approximately 19 kilometres northwest of Fremantle and is accessible via ocean ferries and via light commercial aircraft. These commercial flights fly across Fremantle on a flight path that crosses directly over the Royal Fremantle Golf Course and the Fremantle CBD. These flights travel to and from Rottnest on a booking demand basis. Special private charter aircraft carrying up to 14 passengers are also prevalent. The Fremantle beaches are also highly desirable areas for site seeing flights.

Special Ideas

Sunday 23 March @ 1210 hrs – A single-engine Piper Cherokee with a pilot and three passengers left Rottnest for Jandakot Airport. At 12:10, it collided midair over Fremantle CBD with a Beechcraft King Air carrying 10 passengers to Rottnest. Witnesses heard a loud noise and saw the collision. The Piper crashed near the fishing boat harbour, while the King Air went down in the Beaconsfield area.

WA Police, Fire, and Rescue services report two aircraft have crashed in built-up areas.

This is a major multi-agency response emergency.

Crash Site 1: A Beechcraft King Air crashes near Stevens Street and Swanbourne Street, Fremantle, causing fires in five homes.

Crash Site 2. The Piper Cherokee crashes into the Fremantle Fishing Boat Harbour. The aircraft breaks up and sinks quickly. Private vessels reach the scene quickly, but no survivors are located. Water Police vessels attend and cordon off the crash site.

City of Fremantle and Town of East Fremantle LEMC Joint Recovery Exercise 2025

Sunday 23 March 2024 @ 1400 hrs – The incident is assigned Level 2 by the Police Incident Controller. DFES are dealing with the house fires at crash site 1. The air crash investigation will be handed to Air Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB). Police divers are on scene

The Incident Controller calls the first Incident Support Group meeting. The Incident Controller suggests that the City of Fremantle commences recovery preparations.

Monday 24th March 2025 @ 0900 hrs –

The City of Fremantle calls the first Local Recovery Coordination Group meeting.

Exercise Format

Exercise 'Piper' was conducted as a simulated tabletop emergency exercise focused on the *recovery management* elements that need to be addressed following significant community and infrastructure damage caused by two aircraft being involved in a midair collision and two crash sites impacting the City of Fremantle local government area. The Town of East Fremantle was not impacted by the incident, but the exercise served as a valuable learning experience relative to the local recovery process. Future exercises planned for this LEMC should be planned with a dual local government impact to better suit the joint LEMC.

The Hazard Management Agency (HMA) - WAPOL established an Incident Support Group (ISG).

The Incident Support Group (ISG) recommended that the City of Fremantle consider establishing one joint Local Recovery Coordinating Group (LRCG) with the Town of East Fremantle. While it is acknowledged that this would not normally occur under the circumstances, it was essential to ensure all were involved in the learning process.

The exercise commenced with a brief presentation reaffirming State Emergency Management Policy and arrangements in respect of "Recovery Management", followed by a briefing of the emergency exercise scenario and preliminary actions in the lead-up to the 1st formal joint LRCG Meeting. The exercise was then conducted over 4 Stages.

Stage 1 - The exercise proper commenced with an actual *ISG meeting* of all key stakeholder agencies chaired by the appointed HMA Incident Controller (IC). The Incident Controller provided a Situation Report (SITREP) and an initial damage assessment. Each agency provided a SITREP of their respective agency status and community impacts.

City of Fremantle and Town of East Fremantle LEMC Joint Recovery Exercise 2025

Stage 2 - Local Recovery Coordinating Group (LRCG) meeting. An updated damage assessment was tabled by the HMA and key agencies. The four Local Recovery Sub-Committees were established and tasked accordingly. All other attending participants observed the meeting from the gallery area.

The LRCG chair for the first meeting was the City of Fremantle LRC.

Stage 3 - All four Sub-Committees meet separately but simultaneously chaired by a selected member of the joint LRCG. They assessed the damage impacts and identified priorities, challenges and key short term / long term objectives/actions. These consisted of a blend of joint LRCG members and other attending participants. Agency representatives were available to act as advisors. (i.e., moving around room).

Stage 4 - A second joint LRCG meeting was convened to consider the findings / recommendations of the Sub-Committee (Reports from SC Chairs tabled – 3-4 min each) and the commencement of discussion on building the Operational Recovery Plan.

The chair for the second LRCG was the CEO Town of East Fremantle.

Exercise Simulation Stages

Stage 1 (20 mins)	Simulated ISG Meeting – 8 pax max Simulated ISG meeting with HMA SITREP detailing a broad damage assessment and specifying initial agency recovery challenges and requirements	Chaired by the HMA Incident Controller Darren Davy
Stage 2 (35 mins)	Simulated First LRCG Meeting – 20 pax max Presentation of comprehensive damage assessment (Impact Statement) and determination of recovery management priorities and objectives. SITREPS and input from all agency representatives.	Chaired by LRCG Chair Mark Donnelly Kenan Bender Bindiya Shah
Stage 3 (30 mins)	Sub-Committee Meetings – 4 pax min / 7 max Meeting of 4 x Sub-Committees	Chaired by the pre-determined S/C Chairs with expertise in that area

City of Fremantle and Town of East Fremantle LEMC Joint Recovery Exercise 2025

	Examine damage assessments and setting key priorities and objectives	
Stage 4 (20 mins)	Simulated 2nd LRCG Meeting – 20 pax max Respective Chairs of Sub-Committees to report findings and recommendations to the LRCG. 3 mins each.	Chaired by the LRCG Chair Mark Donnelly

NOTE: Attendees will participate as either LRCG members, LRCG Sub-Committee members, assessors, role players and/or observers.

Exercise Master Schedule

Time	Action	Notes	Who
0930	EXERCISE INTRODUCTION (25 min)		
0955	Welcome / Brief Participants (5 min)	Rules - structures and processes	John Lane
1000	Recovery Management in LG (10 min)	MMP and overview	John Lane
1010	Exercise General Idea / Scenario Overview (10 min)	MMP and overview - setting the scene and lead-up actions	John Lane
EXERCISE SIMULATION (95 min)			
1010	Stage 1 - (20 min) Simulated ISG Meeting	Facilitated by the HMA (WAPOL) Incident Controller	Darren Davy

City of Fremantle and Town of East Fremantle LEMC Joint Recovery Exercise 2025

1030	Stage 2 - (35 mins) Simulated First LRCG Meeting	Facilitated by Chair of Joint Local Recovery Coordinating Group	Mark Donnelly
1105	Stage3 - (30 min) Simulated LRCG Sub- Committee Meetings	Facilitated by the Chair of each Sub-Committee	Vikki Barlow Allan Millard
1135	Stage4 - (20 min) Simulated 2 nd LRCG Meeting with Sub-Committee outcomes reports	Facilitated by Chair of Joint Local Recovery Coordinating Group. Each S/C Chair to present report	Mark Donnelly
POST - EXERCISE (20 min)			
1215	Exercise Wind-Up / Hot Debrief	Presented by Exercise Directors/Assessors	JL
1220	Individual Evaluations	Optional	
1230	Conclusion	Lunch – Networking	

Exercise objectives

1. Practise **recovery management** planning via **combined** local government LRCG meeting(s).
2. Set up all 4 **Recovery Sub-Committees** and practise operational **recovery planning**.
3. Build an awareness and understanding of the LRCG roles and responsibilities.

City of Fremantle and Town of East Fremantle LEMC Joint Recovery Exercise 2025

Exercise Feedback and Ideas for Improvement

Objective 1 – Practice recovery management through LRCG meetings

The general feedback relating to the LRCG meetings was positive. It was very apparent that with the exception of a few people who had experience through previous positions at other local governments that the meeting process was a new experience. Both meetings had alternate chairs commencing with the Local recovery Coordinator for Fremantle. The CEO of the Town of East Fremantle chaired the second LRCG meeting.

Objective 2 – Set up four LRCG Subcommittees and practice recovery planning

The room configuration presented a minor challenge as the reconfiguring of the room took some time to achieve. Due to time constraints in the leadup to the exercise, only the chairs of the various subcommittees were chosen and the persons notified. All exercise participants were engaged in all four of the subcommittees and comments were mostly positive from the participants. Some commented that they had gained valuable insight into recovery activities through these short meetings.

Objective 3 – Build an awareness and understanding of the LRCG roles and responsibilities

Following the exercise, and during a debriefing discussion, it was agreed that all three objectives were met to the credit of all who participated. While exercise planning discussions highlighted the need for education on the role of local government in emergency management, the timeframe for conducting the exercise was short and in-depth instruction was not possible. While some feedback highlighted this fact, the majority of participants benefitted greatly by the background information provided.

- Local Government personnel should avail themselves of the emergency management related courses offered by WALGA.

Exercise attendance

Exercise attendance was lower than expected with several no shows across both local governments. Encouraging attendance at this type of exercise is imperative to its ultimate success. Local government staff consistently change with new staff having in most cases little exposure to emergency management. It is almost impossible to ensure that those who will in their role be exposed to an emergency event at some time, will be able through work related activities to attend on the day. The City of Fremantle is to be commended for taking the initiative to host this exercise. It is imperative that local government personnel be exposed to emergency management recovery exercises wherever possible.

City of Fremantle and Town of East Fremantle LEMC Joint Recovery Exercise 2025

Summary of Outcomes

A summary of outcomes is provided in the table below. These have been deduced from the insights observed during the exercise.

Table of Lessons Identified		
Capability Area	Core Capability and Objectives	Outcomes/Lessons Identified
Governance	Emergency Management Plans	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. While the written emergency management plans including the recovery plans for each represented local government were not directly referenced by participants, relevant guides to recovery for each of the subcommittees were provided for guidance. 2. Cumbersome plans are not always helpful and tend to confuse particularly where time frames are tight. 3. Participants learned more about the EM Arrangements by being involved directly through appropriate guidance.
Emergency Response	Command and Control	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The inclusion in the exercise of the ISG meeting provided an innovative way to both introduce the scenario and provide a valuable insight into response. 2. Many participants reported seeing great value in the ISG meeting as a learning opportunity along with an insight into the workings and thoughts of agencies. 3. More emphasis on emergency management processes needs to be a priority for future exercises

City of Fremantle and Town of East Fremantle LEMC Joint Recovery Exercise 2025

Community Involvement	Public Information	With the absence of the City of Fremantle CEOs, the City of Fremantle Local Recovery Coordinator assumed the role of chair of the LRCG for the first LRCG meeting while the second was chair by the CEO Town of East Fremantle. The City of Fremantle communications officer was present at the exercise.
-----------------------	--------------------	--

City of Fremantle and Town of East Fremantle LEMC Joint Recovery Exercise 2025

DFES Feedback

Assessor's General Comments:

This feedback is designed as one feedback source into the overall Exercise evaluation being undertaken by City of Fremantle and the Town of East Fremantle.

OVERALL COMMENTS: Participating in exercises like this one offers invaluable benefits, allowing attendees to confirm their knowledge and practice and refine their skills in a realistic setting. The exercise structure provided a great opportunity for LEMC members and other key stakeholders to come together and logically progress through the key stages of transitioning from response to recovery after a disaster event. The exercise was well attended and reflected a broad cross-section of agencies, reflective of the needs of an 'air crash' scenario. This added significant value to the discussions, particularly during the recovery sub-committee component.

ENHANCEMENT OPPORTUNITY: While recognizing the short lead time in preparing for this exercise, it is believed that a stronger focus on attendee preparation (e.g., asking them to review the Local Recovery Arrangements prior to attendance), more interactive Q&A sessions throughout the exercise (favouring facilitation over presentation), and opportunities to reflect on possible gaps in the existing Local Recovery Arrangements would have enhanced the learning experience. This approach may have helped to better identify existing knowledge and pinpoint any gaps in both individual and collective knowledge as well as gaps in the existing Local Recovery Arrangements which are currently undergoing a review. While the 'Air Crash' topic provided an excellent opportunity to exercise the recovery arrangements, it was felt that the emphasis was more on the emergency scenario (air crash content) rather than the mechanisms of recovery planning and management. For example, discussions around 'who' should attend LRCG meetings, LRCG triggers and timings, whether the current arrangements reflect the correct committee structures, what should be considered in determining which sub-committees might be advantageous, how to structure sub-committees if participant numbers are not optimal, processes for confirming community needs (versus perceived needs), where to from here etc, would have been beneficial to fully realise the intended objectives. At the commencement of the exercise, it was commented that the LG Plans (Local Emergency Management Arrangements LEMA and Local Recovery Arrangements LRA, also known as Local Recovery Plan LRP) would not be referenced as these were 'cumbersome and not always helpful and tend to confuse'. This provided an opportunity to review and refine these plans to ensure they offer the necessary help and clarity during actual events, which is their primary purpose.

SUMMARY: Exercise objectives 1 and 2 were met, while exercise objective 3 was more challenging to determine, as it depends on the intended level of understanding. Objective 3 was met in the context of 'building an awareness.' In terms of the State

City of Fremantle and Town of East Fremantle LEMC Joint Recovery Exercise 2025

Emergency Management Framework Core Competencies, the maturity level has been determined as 'established,' with capability elements in place.

Other Comments Raised for Consideration:

It is understood that the exercise planning would have benefited from a greater lead time, however sending out a copy of the Local Recovery Arrangements with the Exercise Briefing could have provided attendees with a valuable opportunity to review the document intended as the LG's plan for managing recovery, which relates directly to Objective 1. Even though not all attendees might have accessed this pre-reading opportunity, it is likely that some would have reviewed the Local Recovery Arrangements to some degree. Any enhanced engagement with the LRA would have been beneficial. This would also have provided a reference point for reflection during the exercise conduct. Reflecting on the LRP after the group discussions could have been beneficial, as this might have highlighted existing gaps. Given that the document is due for a review, this could have provided substantial benefits for the LEMA/LRP review process. Based on participant feedback during and after the exercise, spending some additional time at the beginning to establish/reinforce baseline knowledge through a facilitated approach, rather than a presenter-led approach, could have provided greater clarity regarding the existing knowledge of those in the room. There were some apparent policy interpretation contradictions during the presentation (e.g., referencing two Incident Controllers and DFES as the IC even though it was a WA Police incident has the HMA) that raised concerns. It was unclear if everyone in the room understood the issues raised or the clarifications provided. The exercise met its intended objectives. However, with minimal additional investment, greater leverage could have been achieved by reflecting on the existing Local Recovery Arrangements, which are overdue for a review in line with State EM Policy. This may also have contributed to greater learnings for attendees, reinforcing the value of their participation.

NOTE: The above comments are a snapshot of the DFES Exercise Report. The full exercise report will be made available along with this report for full disclosure.

Conclusion

The exercise was well attended with agencies well represented and eager to assist local government. The role of agencies not able to be present was undertaken by role players. All of the role players benefitted by scripting and had no affiliation with the agency concerned but all acquitted themselves well at short notice. Both local governments were represented by key operational and administration staff including directors, business managers, and at least one councillor.

It was pleasing to read through the feedback sheets submitted following the exercise that nearly all feedback was positive with many suggestions that reflected what local governments should be doing to ensure readiness to tackle any emergency

City of Fremantle and Town of East Fremantle LEMC Joint Recovery Exercise 2025

The exercise provided a realistic scenario, a real time Incident Support Group meeting, and hands on Recovery and Subcommittee meetings with plenty of opportunity for networking and participation for all participants. It was explained that the scenario merely sets the scene for discussion and that the most valuable part of the exercise was part taking in the processes.

The exercise was very successful in providing local government personnel with experience in the conduct of a joint recovery exercise while exercising elements of local government recovery plans. Any future exercise would be better served if the scenario focussed on impacts to both local governments to ensure that the process of joint recovery could be better explored adding greater value.

All three objectives were evaluated by the official exercise observer, the District Emergency Management Advisor, DFES. All outcomes were met, and most were exceeded. Refer to the separate DFES Evaluation Report.

As previously stated, the nominated Local Recovery Coordinators of the City of Fremantle was assigned the role of LRCG chair for the first LRCG meeting. The Chief Executive Officer of the Town of East Fremantle assumed that role for the second LRCG meeting. Both acquitted themselves admirably providing confidence that both LRCs are aware of their role and could ably carry out those duties when required. There is an opportunity to design a more useful and abbreviated version of the Local Emergency Management Arrangements and Local Recovery Plan. While work is still ongoing by WALGA and DFES on the redesign of the LEMA it is still a useful exercise to consider alternatives that work for local governments.

The aim of exercising is to provide local government personnel the opportunity to role play in a situation that mirrors as close as possible a real-life scenario.

City of Fremantle and Town of East Fremantle LEMC Joint Recovery Exercise 2025

APPENDIX A: Exercise Participants

City of Fremantle/East Fremantle LEMC Attendees

Name	Agency	Position
Johnathon Throssell	City East Fremantle	CEO
Sarah Romaniello	Town of East Fremantle	Senior Environmental Health Officer
Megan Sargant	Town Of East Fremantle	Senior Environmental Health Officer
Jacqueline Scott	Town of East Fremantle	Executive Manager Technical Services
Jarrad Duggan	City of Fremantle	Team Leader Community Safety
Mark Donnelly	City of Fremantle	Manager Field Services
Vikki Barlow	City of Fremantle	Manager Community Development
Cr Geoff Graham	City of Fremantle	Elected Member

Non LEMC Attendees

Name	Agency	Position
Natasha Turfrey	Town of East Fremantle	Communications and Engagement Officer
Aaron Dolyn	City of Fremantle	Risk Policy Officer
Matt Cantrell	City of Fremantle	Senior compliance Officer
Andrew De Weerd	City of Fremantle	Building Maintenance
Thomas Robinson	Water Corp	

City of Fremantle and Town of East Fremantle LEMC Joint Recovery Exercise 2025

Allocated Exercise Roles

Local Recovery Coordinating Group

COF Participants	Position	ISG Role
Jarrad Duggan	Team Leader Community Safety	Deputy LRC
Mark Donnelly	Manager Field Services	LRC
Other Agency Participants	Position	
Thomas Robertson		Water Corporation
Savio Fernandes		Fremantle Ports
Rebecca Dreverman		Fremantle Ports
Pierre Delattre		Fremantle Ports
Helen Barratt	Disaster Preparedness Leader	Fiona Stanley Hospitals Group
Mike Hayward	Area Manager – Disaster Preparedness and Management	South Metro Health Service and Fiona Stanley Hospitals Group
Donna Morgan	District Emergency Management Advisor – Metro Central	DEFS
Darren Davy	Acting Senior Sargeant	Fremantle Police Station
Troy Stubberfield		DFES
Liam Plant		DPIRD

City of Fremantle and Town of East Fremantle LEMC Joint Recovery Exercise 2025

Exercise Directors, Assessors and Observers Personnel

Participants	Position	Agency
John Lane	Exercise Co-Director TOB	Contractor
Mark Donnelly	Manager Field Services	COF
Donna Morgan	District Emergency Management Advised	DFES

City of Fremantle and Town of East Fremantle LEMC Joint Recovery Exercise 2025

APPENDIX B: Exercise Participant Feedback Summary

Exercise 'Piper' conducted at City of Fremantle – 24 March 2025

Attendees were asked the 6 questions below and a total of 24 evaluation responses received following the exercise.

Q1 Were the objectives of the exercise achieved? 21 Yes 1 No
2 Blank

Comments

- As a new LEMC, may have been better to start with a response activity first to use it to teach.
- Given many people haven't previously had awareness of emergency management in a local government context.
- Some additional background would have assisted.
- Clear and complex. Improved understanding of recovery principles.

Q2 Is exercising a combined LRCG meeting a viable method to practice processes that are not part of day-to-day LG operations?

24 Yes 0 No 0 Blank

Comments

- For those who have not had the opportunity before, more explanation may be required.
- Valuable and should be conducted annually.
- Needs clear indication from facilitator of when this meeting would be called. Timeline of event was not made clear.
- Great experience for persons who have not been exposed before.

Q3 Is exercising Recovery Sub-Committee meetings a viable method to practice processes that are not part of day-to-day LG operations?

24 Yes 0 No 0 Blank

Comments

- Yes – No prior knowledge of local government responsibility.
- Was really good to hear from the experts in their field.
- Raised awareness of what is needed when required.
- As a junior leader it was a valuable experience.
- Miss-information and unclear information needs to be fixed.

City of Fremantle and Town of East Fremantle LEMC Joint Recovery Exercise 2025

Q4 Has exercise Piper increased your awareness of the obligations of Local Government in recovering from a natural disaster? 20 Yes 3 No 1 Blank

Comments

- No prior knowledge of LG involvement.
- Already aware to a large degree.
- It may be worthwhile providing an overview to local governments regarding the different jurisdictions for a relatively small area of impact.

Q5 What did you personally most get out of the exercise?

Comments

- Seeing the different focuses from ISG to LRCG.
- Valuable. No previous exposure to LG recovery processes.
- Engagement with others from Fremantle and East Fremantle.
- Be prepared.
- Understanding roles and meeting others with experience X 5.
- Revision of expectations in a crisis.
- Seeing who is responsible for what and how it all comes together.
- A better understanding of agency expertise in particular Dept. of Communities and DFES.
- Input from key stakeholders WAPOL and DFES etc.
- Insight into how local government functions under such circumstances.
- Interesting to hear from sub-committees' things I had not considered before.
- Better understanding of joint LRCG in the Fremantle region.
- Exposure to the process outside of the BAU.
- Building networks within the City of Fremantle

Q6 What, if any, are the actions necessary to enhance your directorate and/or organisations emergency management RECOVERY procedures or plans?

Comments

- Include some proforma that are used in the recovery process and practice using them.
- Support Fremantle/East Fremantle to renew their LEMA/Local Recovery Plan.
- Sharing information with colleagues.
- Renew plans and ensure staff are aware.
- Crisis comms plan for East Fremantle.
- Review plans and ensure relevance.
- Review, update and align with best practice. X2
- More senior staff to be present at LEMC meetings.
- Better understanding of SEM recovery framework 4 levels of recovery.