

SYDNEY COASTAL COUNCILS GROUP Inc.
MINUTES FOR THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
HELD ON SATURDAY 13 SEPTEMBER, 2014
BY RANDWICK COUNCIL AT THE PRINCE HENRY CENTRE,
LITTLE BAY

PRE MEETING TOUR

(11.30am-12.30pm)

**“Little Bay (Prince Henry) Precinct -
History / Culture / Sustainable Development”**

Randwick Council staff representatives David Ongkili and Lorraine Simpson hosted pre meeting field trip of the Little Bay (Prince Henry) Precinct. This provided delegates with review of the Aboriginal and European history of the area as well a review of sustainability and ecological aspects of the Little Bay Cove redevelopment.

IN ATTENDANCE

Cr. Mark Castle	Botany Bay Council
Cr. Irene Doutney	City of Sydney Council
Cr. Candy Bingham	Manly Council
Cr. Hugh Burns	Manly Council
Mr. Peter Massey	North Sydney Council
Cr. Selena Griffith	Pittwater Council
Mr. Paul Hardie	Pittwater Council
Cr. Geoff Stevenson	Randwick Council
Cr. Lindsay Shurey	Randwick Council
Cr. Scott Nash(Mayor)	Randwick Council
Mr. David Dekel	Rockdale Council
Cr. Peter Towell	Sutherland Council
Cr. Sue Heins	Warringah Council
Cr. Sally Betts (Mayor)	Waverley Council
Cr. Leon Gottsman	Waverley Council
Cr. Lynne Saville	Willoughby Council
Cr. Greg Levenston	Woollahra Council
Emeritus Professor Bruce Thom AM	Honorary Member
Mr. George Cotis	Honorary Member
Dr. Judy Lambert AM	Honorary Member
Ms. Wendy McMurdo	Honorary Member
Mr. Geoff Withycombe	SCCG (EO)
Mr. Stephen Summerhayes	SCCG (MP&P)
Dr. Ian Armstrong	SCCG (PO-SP)
Ms. Emma Norrie	SCCG (CPO)

1. OPENING

The meeting opened at 1.30pm.

Cr Stevenson (SCCG Vice Chairperson) welcomed SCCG delegates and noted that Cr Griffin (SCCG Chairperson) was an apology for the AGM. Cr Stevenson introduced the Mayor of Randwick, Cr Scott Nash to welcome delegates to Randwick.

Mayor Nash acknowledged the traditional owners and welcomed the SCCG to Randwick Council's Prince Henry Centre. Mayor Nash noted his attendance at the recent SCCG 25 year celebrations and congratulated the Group on this great event and acknowledged the substantial work of the SCCG over the last 25 years.

2. APOLOGIES

Cr. Brian Troy	Botany Bay Council
Cr. John Mant	City of Sydney Council
Cr. Linda Scott	City of Sydney Council
Cr. Cathy Griffin	Manly Council
Cr. Barbara Aird	Manly Council
Cr. Tony Carr	North Sydney Council
Cr. Shane O'Brian (Mayor)	Rockdale Council
Cr. Vanessa Moskal	Warringah Council
Cr. Wendy Norton	Willoughby Council
Cr. Matthew Robertson	Woollahra Council
Mr. Phil Colman	Honorary Member

Resolved that the apologies be received and noted.

Councils not represented at the meeting
Hornsby, Leichhardt and Mosman.

3. DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS

Resolved that there was no declaration of pecuniary interests.

4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

4.1 Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the SCCG held on 14 June 2014 at the City of Sydney.

Resolved that the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the SCCG held on 14 June 2014 at the City of Sydney Council be confirmed.

4.2 Minutes of the Executive Committee of the SCCG held on 14 June 2014 at the City of Sydney.

Resolved that the Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting of the SCCG held on 14 June 2014 hosted by the City of Sydney be received and noted.

4.3 Minutes of the Technical Committee Meeting of the SCCG held on 7 August 2014 hosted by Sydney Water at their Monitoring Services Laboratory, West Ryde.

Resolved that the Minutes of the Technical Committee Meeting of the SCCG held on 7 August 2014 hosted by Sydney Water at their Monitoring Services laboratory, West Ryde be received and noted.

5. BUSINESS ARISING

Business arising from Minutes other than those items listed below in Reports. Delegates were referred the action list contained within the meeting notice memo.

- **Establishment of workshop with Sydney Water, IPART and NSW EPA to end ocean outfalls**

The SCCG facilitate an “Integrated Water Management” forum in the second half of 2014. This event will address WSUD, sewage outfalls, infrastructure issues including the SCCG integrated water project and the SCCG Water Recycling Guidelines (under development).

This activity is outstanding due to lack of resources and is now likely to be scheduled for early 2015.

- **Seek meeting with the new NSW Environment Minister**

The SCCG seek a meeting with the new Environment Minister, the Hon Rob Stokes MP (delegation to include the Executive Officer, Cr Griffin, Cr Betts, Cr Levenston, Cr Stevenson and Cr Towell).

The EO noted that the Minister was the guest speaker at the recent SCCG 25 Year Gala Evening, however no response to the request for the delegation had been received as yet. The EO will follow this up.

Resolved that:

- 1) **Establishment of workshop with Sydney Water, IPART and NSW EPA to end ocean outfalls** be re-scheduled for early 2015.
- 2) **Seek meeting with the new NSW Environment Minister** - The EO will follow up the SCCG request for a delegation meeting with the Minister.

6. ANNUAL REPORTS

6.1 Chairperson’s Annual Report

(ATTACHED)

Cr Griffin’s Annual report was not available at the meeting. It was resolved that the Annual report be included with the Minutes.

Resolved that the Chairperson’s Annual Report be included in the minutes of the AGM.

6.2 Executive Officer’s Annual Report

(ATTACHED)

The report was tabled at the meeting. The EO provided delegates with a presentation providing a summary of the year’s activities and achievements. This included a review of:

- Key Areas of Focus
- The Year in Review – ‘Facts and Figures’
- SCCG Internal Activities
- Key SCCG Program Outcomes
- Financial Position
- Conclusions and Thanks

The MPP, Stephen Summerhayes, then provided a review of the meetings and activities of the SCCG Technical Committee (this presentation is also attached to the minutes).

Delegates formally thanked SCCG secretariat staff for their activities throughout 2013-2014.

Resolved that:

- 1) The Executive Officer's (public officer) Annual Report be received, considered and adopted as part of the 2013/2014 Annual Report.
- 2) The Chairperson's and Executive Officer's Annual Reports be forward to Member Council General Managers for their information.
- 3) SCCG Delegates formally thank SCCG secretariat staff for their activities throughout 2013-2014.

7. ANNUAL ELECTIONSProceedings in Brief

Cr. Stevenson advised that Cr. Cathy Griffin will not be contesting the seat of Chairperson.

Cr. Stevenson introduced the procedures for the Annual Executive Committee elections. The Executive Committee consists of the Chairperson, two Vice Chairpersons, Treasurer and Secretary and up to three other committee members who are delegates of financial Member Councils.

As per tradition, Cr. Stevenson handed over the Chair to Professor Bruce Thom as returning officer for the purposes of the election of Chairperson.

7.1 Chairperson

Cr. Geoff Stevenson (Randwick Council) was nominated and elected Chairperson.

7.2 Vice Chairpersons**(i) Vice Chairperson (ocean council)**

Cr. Cathy Griffin (Manly Council) was nominated and elected Vice Chairperson (Ocean Council).

(ii) Vice Chairperson (estuarine council)

Cr. Lynne Saville (Willoughby Council) was nominated and elected Vice Chairperson (Estuarine Council).

7.3 Treasurer (Honorary)

Cr. Peter Towell (Sutherland Council) was nominated and elected Treasurer.

7.4 Secretary (Honorary)

Cr. Leon Goltsman (Waverley Council) was nominated and elected Secretary.

7.5 Executive Members

The following delegates were nominated and elected

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| 1) Cr. Irene Doutney | City of Sydney Council |
| 2) Cr. Selina Griffith | Pittwater Council |
| 3) Cr. Greg Levenston | Woollahra Council |

The 2014 - 2015 Sydney Coastal Councils Group Inc. Executive Committee consists of:

Chairperson	Cr. Geoff Stevenson	Randwick
Vice Chairperson (Ocean council)	Cr. Cathy Griffin	Manly
Vice Chairperson (Estuarine Council)	Cr. Lynne Saville	Willoughby
Treasurer (Honorary)	Cr. Peter Towell	Sutherland

Secretary (Honorary Member)	Cr. Leon Goltsman	Waverley
Member	Cr. Irene Doutney	City of Sydney
Member	Cr. Selena Griffith	Pittwater
Member	Cr. Greg Levenston	Woollahra

7.6 Nominations for SCCG Honorary Members

Nominations for honorary membership for 2014-2015 to include but not limited to:

- E/Prof. Bruce Thom AM
- Dr Judy Lambert AM
- Mr Phil Colman
- Mr George Cotis
- Mr George Copeland
- Ms Wendy McMurdo

Resolved that:

- 1) The SCCG Honorary members nominations be endorsed.
- 2) The Secretariat write to nominees inviting them to consider becoming Honorary Members.

7.7 Nominations for External Committees (if required)

Nominations for the Boating Advisory Committee were deferred to the December meeting, following Cr. Griffin's report on Committee activities.

Resolved that External Committee representation(s) be deferred to the December meeting, following Cr. Griffin's report on Committee activities.

8. CORRESPONDENCE

8.1 Sent and Received Correspondence

Resolved that the circulated "sent" and "received" correspondence be received and noted.

9. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

9.1 SCCG 25 Year Anniversary "Caring for the Coast"

Proceedings in Brief

The CPO provided an overview of the aims and outcomes from the Conference and Gala Evening held on 29 August 2014.

The core aims of the events were to:

- acknowledge the multiple values of Sydney's coast and promote their protection
- review the role of the SCCG in coastal management in Sydney over the last 25 years
- unite Member Councils and key partners of the Group
- scope future directions for coastal management.

The Conference was attended by 84 participants representing 45 different organisations. Highlights included a session on Valuing Sydney's Coast featuring students from Pittwater High School and Emeritus Professor Bruce Thom AM, presentations from Sydney Water and the Department of Planning and Environment, a panel session from former and current members of the Group and a presentation and workshop on looking forward 25 years, facilitated by ecologist and futurist, Dr Steven Cork.

The Gala Evening was attended by 90 participants representing 52 different organisations. Highlights included a presentation from the NSW Environment Minister, the Hon Rob Stokes MP, historian and author Dr Ian Hoskins and founding SCCG Chairperson, Ms Barbara Armitage OAM.

The SCCG would like to thank our sponsors for the events, Sydney Water and the Department of Planning and Environment.

The EO again noted the extraordinary efforts of the SCCG CPO Emma Norrie in organising these substantial events on behalf of the Group. Delegates congratulated Emma and the Team on running such professional events.

Resolved that the report be received and considered.

9.2 Consideration of SCCG representation for the Greater Sydney LLS Advisory Group(s)

Proceedings in Brief

The LLS has written to the SCCG seeking consideration of SCCG nomination for representation on the Greater Sydney Local Land Services - Local Government Advisory Group (LGAG).

Cr. Stevenson nominated Cr. Griffin as the SCCG representative for the Advisory Group.

The EO noted some confusion regarding Council representation on the Group. Delegates reiterated this confusion and questioned the focus and relevance of LLS to the SCCG (and the Sydney metropolitan region), given the shift in focus towards agricultural management.

Cr. Betts suggested a second representative be nominated, given the size of the SCCG. Cr. Betts nominated Prof Thom as the second representative for the SCCG.

SCCG Representatives to the LLS Local Government Advisory Group are:

1. Cr. Cathy Griffin - SCCG Vice Chairperson (Ocean)
2. Prof Bruce Thom AM - SCCG Honorary member

Alternative: Cr. Geoff Stevenson - SCCG Chairperson

The Advisory Group is meeting on 17 September 2014.

Other discussion notes:

- Cr. Betts noted confusion regarding the lack of nomination of SSROC.
- Prof Thom queried the role of the GS LLS and sought clarification from delegates.
- Dr Lambert noted the significant downsizing of resources and focus on the NRM role (in comparison to the former CMAs). Dr Lambert also noted that the other LLS areas had prohibitive requirements for the Chairs relating to ownership of rural property.
- Cr. Saville noted the importance of conserving agricultural land in the Sydney basin, particularly given that the Metropolitan Strategy does not include agricultural land.

It was noted that Cr. Griffin, Prof Thom and Cr. Stevenson were unable to attend the first meeting of the LGAG. Cr. Saville was nominated to attend in the place of Cr. Griffin. It was further resolved that the nominated SCCG representatives and Cr. Saville report back to the SCCG December meeting on outcomes of this first meeting.

The EO further noted that he had been invited to sit on the GS LLS Community Advisory Committee, which he had accepted.

Resolved that:

- 1) The report and attachments be received and considered.
- 2) The SCCG nominated delegates to the Greater Sydney LLS Local Government Advisory Committee (LGAG) be:
 - Cr. Cathy Griffin - SCCG Vice Chairperson (Ocean)
 - Prof Bruce Thom AM - SCCG Honorary member
 - Alternative: Cr. Geoff Stevenson - SCCG Chairperson
- 3) The EO represent the SCCG on the Greater Sydney LLS Community Advisory Committee.

9.3 Review / Re-Development of the SCCG Strategic Plan (2015-2019)Proceedings in Brief

Dr. Lambert provided an overview of the Strategic Plan review process.

The EO informed delegates that the draft strategic plan 2015-2019 is not in a form that can be considered as a complete entity at the meeting. The EO updated delegates on further refinements by the Secretariat based on Directional Committee and TC feedback, including the Group's proposed Vision, Mission, Aim(s) and Objectives.

The following discussion ensued:

- Cr. Heins suggested addition of 'waterways' to the Vision to capture the estuarine areas represented by the Group. In response, the MPP clarified that 'coastal areas' would be clearly defined in the document as including estuarine areas.
- Mr Cotis asked why 'catchment' had not been included. In response, Dr Lambert noted the already stretched resources of the Group and the need to contain the workload to things that are very clearly coastal management issues.
- Cr. Levenston suggested the Vision be changed to 'Our coastal areas are understood and valued' to reduce the duplication between Vision and Mission.
- Cr. Griffith suggested the Vision be amended to be in active tense. In response, the EO suggested this may be more appropriate for the Mission, with the Vision resembling more a collective statement about a desired future condition.
- Prof Thom questioned the Vision (valued by whom?), noting that it creates ambiguity and that coasts are often vulnerable to vested interests.
- Cr. Saville suggested specifying 'natural values' in the Vision. In response, the EO suggested that if one aspect of the quadruple bottom line is identified (i.e. environmental values), all others should be (i.e. economic and social values).
- Cr. Saville noted the absence of any references to NRM.
- Cr. Bingham noted that the Vision is uninspiring and does not convey the focus or purpose of the Group.
- Cr. Goltsman suggested further deliberation of the Group's focus may elucidate a clearer Vision. He noted that the Vision should be like a 'tag line'.
- Cr. Hugh Burns suggested the Full Group is too large a forum to deliberate this.

The overall opinion was that the Committee process may have potentially summarised the Vision and Mission of the Group too much.

The EO noted that, following the meeting, the Secretariat will finalise the draft Strategic Plan for the review of the Directional Committee and Full Group. Once this draft is finalised it will be sent formally to Member Councils for consultation. It is intended that the final draft (Member Council endorsed) Strategic Plan will be tabled at the December Full Group meeting for adoption.

Resolved that:

- 1) The report be received and considered.
- 2) Delegates workshop specific issues requiring attention.
- 3) The first draft SCCG Strategic Plan be forwarded to the Directional Committee and the Full Group for comment. The final draft then be sent formally to Member Councils for consultation. It is intended that the final draft (Member Council endorsed) Strategic Plan will be tabled at the December Full Group meeting for adoption.

10. REPORTS
**Reports 10.1 - 10.6
FOR CONSIDERATION**
10.1 Reforms to Coastal Management in NSWProceedings in Brief

The EO advised of a recent 'initial' OEH workshop with SCCG Member Council staff, outlining the Stage 2 reforms. There will be formal consultations with Councils in November and December, with a view to releasing outcomes prior to the next State election. There was an indication that the State Government will be looking at re-setting SLR benchmarks through an independent panel and developing a new Act to replace the *Coastal Protection Act 1979*.

Prof Thom noted that there are two outstanding items from Stage 1 - hazard notations on s149 Certificates and SLR benchmarks. It is expected that further information on the s149 Certificates will be available shortly. Prof Thom also noted that Statewide Insurance is being advised by DLA Piper about potential legal liabilities and called on Councils to seek advice from the two organisations.

Prof Thom also noted that Minister Stokes has re-confirmed the three core components of the Stage 2 reforms and that the role of the Coastal Expert Panel and its membership is now publicly available on the OEH website.

Three key themes for the Stage 2 reforms are:

- Establishing a simpler and more integrated legal and policy framework for coastal management
- Providing improved guidance and technical advice to councils, while enabling and supporting local decision making
- Identifying potential funding options, particularly to implement coastal asset management strategies.

Prof Thom noted that the complexity of the reforms and the multiple agencies involved.

Prof Thom also noted recent developments at the Federal level, with Minister Hunt announcing a review of marine protected areas. However Minister Hunt is supportive of NCCARF working with Local Government on SLR-related issues. The NCCARF contract with Griffith University has been under negotiation for 7 months, with no final outcome. Prof Thom suggested the EO seek representation on the NCCARF Coastal Advisory Committee(s) once the contract is signed.

Resolved that:

1. The report be received and noted.
2. Prof Bruce Thom AM provide the Group with an update of activities from the Coastal Expert Panel (where possible).
3. Through discussion, the SCCG determine additional actions to address Member Council issues and concerns.

10.2 SCCG Capacity Building Program Report

Proceedings in Brief

The CPO provided an overview of key capacity building activities over the 2013-14 financial year. There were three capacity building events and two project launches:

- Art of Communication – August 2013
- Tapping into Local Knowledge – November 2013
- ABC of Coastal Economics – November 2013
- COVERMAR Project Launch – February 2014
- Prioritising Coastal Adaptation Development Options for Local Government Project Launch – March 2014.

These five events attracted 248 participants, representing 75 different organisations, the majority of where were Local Government, followed by State Government, the private sector and research / academia.

Resolved that the report be received and considered.

10.3 Launch of the SCCG Emergency Management Planning - a Health Check for Local Government

Proceedings in Brief

The Project Officer Dr Ian Armstrong reported on developments since the last meeting.

Consultation feedback on the draft health Check was initially limited, however the review process has been ongoing and the Project Officer has now followed up with respondents who did not initially respond.

The Project Officer emphasised that the tool is not meant as an 'audit' of Council, but as a guiding and support tool.

The latest version of the tool includes practical actions rather than KPIs, in an attempt to make it more forward-looking.

There was also sensitivity about Council's judging the LEMC, so the two roles have been portioned in the revised tool.

Project Outcomes are being launched on 17 September. Mr Phil Koperberg AO AFSM BEM, Chairman of the State Emergency Management Committee, will be the keynote speaker.

The EO noted that Ian will be leaving the SCCG after the completion of the project and the conclusion of his contract. The EO noted that Ian has worked for the SCCG periodically over the last 10 years in various contract roles and thanked Ian for his substantial contributions over this time.

Resolved that:

1. The report be received and noted.
2. SCCG delegates attend, and/or encourage senior managers to attend the Project Launch Forum addressing project outcomes on the 17 September 2014
3. Dr Ian Armstrong be thanked for his substantial contributions to the SCCG.

10.4 Sydney's Salty Communities – Turning the Tide on Blue+Green Carbon

Proceedings in Brief

The EO provided a brief update on the project, noting the departure of Michael Dean from the organisation. The SCCG has advertised and secured applications for the Stage II Project Manager role. Interviews will be held in the coming weeks with the position scheduled to be filled toward the end of October. It was also noted that the project was slightly delayed but scheduled to be back on track by the end of December 2014.

Resolved that the report be received and considered.

10.5 NSW Shark Meshing Program

Proceedings in Brief

The Shark Meshing Program (SMP) commences each year from 1 September and concludes 30 April the following year. Manly Council has recently written to the SCCG seeking support for a review of the NSW Shark Meshing program at the end of the 2014 session. Cr. Candy Bingham provided an overview of the problems created by shark nets and the reasoning behind Manly Council's support for reform.

Cr. Bingham advised that 96% of what the nets collect are not sharks and that their physical protection is limited, with nets covering only part of the beach. Nets are 100m long and 6m wide

Cr. Bingham brought a sample of an eco-barrier which is reported to reduce by-catch. She also reported on the use of life buoys in Bondi, which alert lifesavers to the potential presence of sharks.

Cr. Bingham sought the Group's support on the following recommendations, as outlined in the SCCG AGM agenda:

- 1) The SCCG write to its Member Councils seeking they write to the Premier and the Minister for Primary Industries seeking support for a review of the NSW Shark Meshing Program to include consideration of non-lethal alternatives to shark meshing and a reduction in beach meshing days per year.
- 2) The SCCG write to NSW Premier and the Minister for Primary Industries noting the above and seeking a formal review of the NSW Shark Meshing Program.
- 3) The SCCG seek a Department of Primary Industries presentation at the next meeting to provide a briefing regarding the NSW Shark Meshing Program and to discuss possible non-lethal alternatives to shark meshing, including new technologies such as Clever Buoy.

The MPP asked whether independent data is being collected on shark nets to inform decision-making. George Cotis advised that DPI does report on net catch.

The EO noted that in 2009 the SCCG attended a Shark Summit at the Sydney Aquarium with South Africa and all Australian states except NT. It was revealed that, at the time, maintenance contractors for shark nets were not required to report net catch, and the Group successfully lobbied to ensure that this was reported to DPI moving forward.

Cr. Golstman noted that the Bondi SLS are not confident in the Clever Buoy technology. He was concerned that alternatives may not provide the same safety to humans.

Delegates agreed adding a resolution calling on the government to undertake an independent scientific review of technologies.

Cr. McMurdo noted that many Sydney beaches do not have shark nets and that the incidence of shark attack is no different, suggesting there is little or no correlation between nets and decreased risk.

Dr. Lambert suggested calling on DPI to provide whatever data they currently hold on shark nets and alternative technologies.

The EO distilled the conversation to the following recommendations:

- 1) The SCCG write to DPI requesting a full report on the NSW Shark Meshing Program, including the science behind it and considerations and current research activities looking at alternatives risk management strategies to netting and culling.
- 2) That DPI be asked to present this report at the December meeting of the SCCG.

Resolved that:

- 1) The address by Cr Bingham be received and noted.
- 2) The SCCG write to DPI requesting a full report on the NSW Shark Meshing Program, including the science behind it and considerations and current research activities looking at alternatives risk management strategies to netting and culling.
- 3) That DPI be asked to present this report at the December meeting of the SCCG.

10.6 Marine Estate Management Authority – Update Report

Resolved that:

- 1) The report be received and considered.
- 2) The SCCG seek the MEMA to provide an update report for each SCCG meeting.

Reports 10.7 – 10.10 FOR INFORMATION ONLY

Resolved that reports for ‘information only’ be received and noted (pending inquiry).

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|-------|--|-----------------------|
| 10.7 | Beachwatch Program Report (May - July 2014) | |
| 10.8 | Greater Sydney Local Land Services Update - August 2014 | (tabled at meeting) |
| 10.9 | NSW Department of Primary Industries Aquatic Pest and Health Update | (not provided by DPI) |
| 10.10 | Key Activities Report for June - August 2014 | |

11. TREASURER’S REPORT

11.1 Annual Financial Statement for the period 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014

The EO tabled a revised Income & Expenditure Statement after an error was identified in consultation with the SCCG Bookkeeper.

Resolved that:

- 1) The amended Annual Financial Statement for the period 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014 be received and noted.
- 2) That Sydney Coastal Councils Group Inc make the following statement (subject to the satisfactory audit of the SCCG finances):

In the opinion of the Members of the Sydney Coastal Councils Group Inc:

(a) the accompanying general purpose financial report and special schedules of the Sydney Coastal Councils Group Inc for the period ending 30 June 2014 are drawn up so as to give a true and fair view of:

- (i) the state of affairs of the Group as at 30 June 2014, and the operating result and cash flows for the financial year ended on that date and all controlled entities; and
- (ii) the other matters required to be disclosed;
- (b) the general purpose financial report and special schedules are in accordance with the accounting and other records of the Group; and
- (c) the general purpose financial report is drawn up in accordance with accounting policy disclosed in the statement; and
- (d) no circumstances have arisen which would render the report false or misleading in any way.

12. GENERAL BUSINESS

Discussion Items

- **Cabinet in Confidence study on risk to life from flash flooding document** – access to document sought by Pittwater Council to assist it in undertaking a Risk to Life Assessment which will form a base document to its Risk to Life Policy.

Pittwater Council is concerned about risk to life from flash flooding. The SES advocates evacuation as the appropriate response, however Pittwater Council is attempting to promote earlier intervention / awareness by identifying flood risk through appropriate land use planning controls

A paper was prepared by the State Government on the issue, however this has been declared Cabinet-in-Confidence. At its last meeting, the TC formally recommended that the FG be asked to support Pittwater's efforts to gain access to the paper.

Cr. Stevenson proposed to revise the recommendation to read that the SCCG would support Pittwater's application. The final wording of the resolution will be forwarded to the Executive out of session following further discussion with Pittwater.

Resolved that:

- 1) The SCCG support Pittwater Council application to obtain the access the NSW government study on risk to life from flash flooding document
- 2) The final wording of the resolution will be forwarded to the Executive out of session following further discussion with Pittwater.

Resolved that:

1. The SCCG support Pittwater Council's application to obtain the access the NSW government study on risk to life from flash flooding document
2. The final wording of the letter be forwarded to the Executive Committee out of session for approval following further discussion with Pittwater Council.

- **10/50 Vegetation Clearing Code of Practice**

TC representatives expressed significant concern about the amended Bushfire Protection Laws and sought the assistance of the Full Group to:

- a) access all submissions made
- b) obtain details of the scientific evidence underpinning the Code
- c) ascertain how consultation informed the final version of the Code
- d) identify how the RFS will restore habitat cleared by landowners.

The EO explained the implications of the recent changes to vegetation clearing and related concerns about impacts on clearing and native species.

- a. The 10/50 Clearing Code of Practice that is currently in place in NSW was adopted after an inadequate consultation period of just three weeks. There appears to have been little, if any, consideration of consultation feedback, with the final Code released just two days after the close of submissions and largely replicating the consultation draft.
- b. The 10/50 Code overrides all protections for trees and vegetation in "10/50 vegetation clearing entitlement areas" that are found in Councils Tree Protection Orders, Local Environment Plans and Development Control Plans.
- c. The Code also overrides all State Legal protections for threatened species and endangered ecological communities.
- d. The 10/50 Code is not supported by peer-reviewed evidence that says clearing mature trees up to 350 metres from bushfire prone land protects residences from ember attack during a fire.

Dr. Lambert noted that there is significant angst in the local bushfire management committee, of which she is a member. Dr. Lambert opposed recommendation (d), noting that it may have the unintended consequence of sanctioning the use of offsets.

The EO outlined revised recommendations:

SCCG write to the Premier / Minister and relevant agencies recommending:

- i. A suspension of the 10/50 code until a review is undertaken
- ii. Comprehensive mapping of the clearing entitlement areas in the LGA be made publicly available, including the criteria for defining such areas
- iii. A scientific review into the ecological impacts and actual bushfire hazard reduction benefits of these provisions, across urban and non-urban areas and/or local and regional scales
- iv. A process under which local councils can seek to opt out of some of all of the provisions of the 10/50 Code
- v. A detailed public education process be undertaken to clarify what is and what is not permissible and associated consequences for illegal actions and other useful public compliance, management and further information details.

It was noted that there was concern that the areas had been mapped without any ground-truthing and that recommendation 2 should be amended to address this.

Prof Thom noted the risk of destabilisation of land due to clearing and increased potential landslide risks.

Resolved that the SCCG write to the Premier / Minister and relevant agencies recommending:

- 1) A suspension of the 10/50 code until a review is undertaken
- 2) Comprehensive mapping of the clearing entitlement areas in the LGA be made publicly available, including the criteria for defining such areas (with all mapping being ground truthed)
- 3) A scientific review into the ecological impacts and actual bushfire hazard reduction benefits of these provisions, across urban and non-urban areas and/or local and regional scales
- 4) A process under which local councils can seek to opt out of some of all of the provisions of the 10/50 Code

5) A detailed public education process be undertaken to clarify what is and what is not permissible and associated consequences for illegal actions and other useful public compliance, management and further information details.

12.1 Remaining 2014 Meeting date / Next Meeting

Dates	Location
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saturday 6 December 2014 at 12 noon 	(City of Sydney – pending)

12.2 Items for Press Release

Inquiry was made regarding press activity in relation the SCCG 25 year celebrations. The EO informed delegates that substantial efforts were made to secure media coverage, including the development of a combined SCCG and Sydney Water press release and developing of supporting materials, however no local press was secured.

• **The China Daily**

On an interesting note, through various SCCG contacts the China Daily ran an opinion piece on the event and how Chinese coastal cities could learn a lot from the activities of the SCCG:

http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/opinion/2014-09/17/content_18610625.htm

Resolved that items for press release be considered.

12.3 Agenda items for the next SCCG meeting

Resolved that delegates suggest additional agenda items including presentations for the next SCCG meeting proposed for 6 December 2014 starting at 12 noon.

12.4 Next Meeting

Resolved that the next meeting of the Group be held on 6 December 2014 at the City of Sydney (pending confirmation).

Cr Stevenson closed the meeting and thanked delegates for their attendance and contributions.

The meeting closed at 4.55pm.

Confirmation of Minutes:
/ /