

ISJO Matters Spring 2021

The Illawarra Shoalhaven Region comprises the local government areas of Wollongong, Shellharbour, Kiama and the Shoalhaven.

Our region is renowned for its scenic beauty, diversity and its innovative industrial, service, creative and knowledge economy. The Illawarra Shoalhaven has a population in excess of 400,000 and a gross regional product (GRP) of \$25.091 billion.

It is one of Australia's most significant regional contributors to national prosperity.

The Illawarra Shoalhaven Joint Organisation (ISJO) is an authority operating within the framework of the NSW Local Government Act.

ISJO's role is to:

- Establish strategic regional priorities for the joint organisation area and to establish strategies and plans for delivering those strategic regional priorities
- Provide regional leadership for the joint organisation area and to be an advocate for strategic regional priorities, and
- Identify and take up opportunities for inter-governmental co-operation on matters relating to the joint organisation area.

ISJO works in partnership with our Member Councils, State Agencies and peak organisations in helping achieve the best possible outcomes for our region's communities.

ISJO Matters is our Joint Organisation Newsletter and provides information on recent programs and projects undertaken under the ISJO Banner.

RESIDENTIAL ASBESTOS DISPOSAL SCHEME



Inside this Spring 2021 Edition:

- Our Region says "Thank You" to our Local Health District Workers
- NSW Government Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy: 2041 (WaSM) delivery plan advocacy
- Plastic Waste CRC Bid
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- Drone trial to control destructive weed

Our Logo

ISJO's logo was adopted in 2019 and is a graphic representation of the geographic placement of our four Member Council areas (Wollongong to the north, then Shellharbour, Kiama and the Shoalhaven to the south) and the strategic linkages and shared (overlapping) operational, economic, community and infrastructure interests that drive our collective endeavours.

Our Region says “Thank You” to our Local Health District Workers

ISJO’s Board unanimously resolved at its September 2021 to write to the CEO of the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District and to express, on behalf of our region’s communities, sincere thanks for the dedication and commitment of all the employees of the Local Health District since the beginning of the COVID-19 Pandemic period.

A copy of the Board’s letter follows.



29 September 2021

Chris Bertinshaw
Chair
Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District
PO Box 239
PORT KEMBLA NSW 2505

Dear Mr Bertinshaw

A letter of thanks from the communities of the Illawarra Shoalhaven

The past eighteen months have perhaps been the most challenging period our local, state, national and indeed international communities have faced in many decades. The COVID-19 Pandemic has affected every facet of life and has left no one untouched. We have had to radically change the way we work, live, interact with one another and plan for the future in constantly changing and to a large degree uncharted circumstances.

These have been troubling and enormously difficult times.

As we move towards what we hope is a post-Pandemic future we can take comfort from the inherent resilience of the human spirit and the extraordinary scientific skills and insights that will help us manage and prosper into the future.

We can also take comfort in what has been one of the few positive constants during the long months of the Pandemic, and that has been the extraordinary, selfless and unceasing contribution of the hard working nurses, doctors, administrators and support staff within our public health system.

During the Pandemic the staff of the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District have been at the front line of efforts to protect and improve the health and well-being of everyone within our regional community. They have done so at personal risk, often to the point of exhaustion and at deep cost in terms of family life and interaction.

On behalf of the residents of our communities we, the four Mayors of the Illawarra Shoalhaven, would ask that you pass on to every worker within the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District our very genuine thanks and deep respect for their dedication, skill and single minded focus on the best possible health outcomes for every man, woman and child within their care.

24 Terralong Street Kiama NSW 2533
PO Box 148 Kiama NSW 2533
isjo.org.au

We live in an area famed for its enviable lifestyle. The liveability of the Illawarra Shoalhaven extends, however, far beyond the undoubted physical beauty of our surroundings. At its heart are the people who live here and who care for and believe in one another.

The staff of the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District have demonstrated what it truly means to be part of our regional community. We are enormously proud of them and grateful for everything that they do.

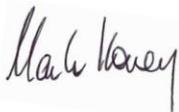
Yours sincerely



Cr Gordon Bradbery AM, Chair of the Illawarra Shoalhaven Joint Organisation and Lord Mayor of the City of Wollongong



Cr Marianne Saliba, Deputy Chair of the Illawarra Shoalhaven Joint Organisation and Mayor of the City of Shellharbour



Cr Mark Honey, Mayor of Kiama



Cr Amanda Findley, Mayor of the City of Shoalhaven

cc. The Hon. Gladys Berejiklian MP, Premier of New South Wales
The Hon. Brad Hazzard MP, Minister for Health and Medical Research
Margot Mains, CEO, Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District

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Plastic Waste CRC Bid

The ISJO recently partnered with more than 100 leading national research, industry and government organisations on bid for the establishment of a Plastic Waste Cooperative Research Centre (CRC). The purpose of the CRC will be to develop a strategic solutions to the challenges associated with our use of plastics and to provide a platform to unite and galvanise key stakeholders to work together and to proactively take responsibility for the waste we generate.

The CRC project nationally has secured cash commitments of approximately \$38 million and in-kind contributions of around \$76 million. A funding request of \$40 million has also been submitted to the Commonwealth.

The ISJO will participate as an affiliate partner of the CRC. Our strategic alignment with the project will enable enhanced focus on agreed regional priorities such as:

- maximising the regions assets through enabling connectivity
- leading regional initiatives for maintaining jobs growth, and
- protecting our regions natural assets and reducing environmental impacts.

The CRC will focus on developing collaborative partnerships with Government, industry, peak organisations and other stakeholders. ISJO will help resource this activity through our regional leadership model, reciprocal access to partnerships that we have established, assistance in expanding partnerships and support in identifying market opportunities that will enable a productive economy for plastics.

The bid will be assessed over the next few months and we expect to learn if we have been short-listed for the CRC Program's Stage 2 process by November 2021.

NSW Government Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy: 2041 (WaSM) delivery plan advocacy

In the last few months the ISJO has actively participated in the provision of regionally significant feedback on the NSW Government's Waste Delivery Plan. The Waste Delivery Plan incorporates the commitments contained in the WaSM as well as the EPA's Strategic Plan.

In conjunction with Councils in the Southern Waste Group we responded on issues such as:

- The mandating of kerbside organics collection
- Appropriate funding to deal with current and ongoing issues with kerbside FOGO (Food Organic and Garden Organics) collections
- Legislative and regulatory reforms needed to keep up

with changing markets. For example:

- compostable packaging not being accepted in kerbside FOGO bins due to EPA regulations
- Resource Recovery Orders and Exemptions are probative for trials e.g. trialing a different landfill daily capping material
- Waste classifications cause barriers to innovation e.g. aggregation of MDF outside a licensed facility for trial purposes
- % of the levy that is reinvested back to Councils and regional projects
- Incentivising existing landfill gas capture systems in place locally
- Supporting EPA drive towards a carbon- negative waste sector
- The need for transparency from the EPA in future plans e.g. Energy from Waste policy restrictions on location for future infrastructure
- Reduction in funding under Better Waste and Recycling – currently the only non- contestable funding Councils and regional groups receive.
- Lack of regional representation on expert reference groups



Following on from written feedback, we participated in a face to face discussion with the EPA Major Projects team to further illustrate the regional issues. Through October we are continuing to advocate for the region through program design and implementation workshops.

Free program to reduce illegal asbestos dumping in the Illawarra

The Illawarra Shoalhaven Joint Organisation (ISJO) is conducting a grant-funded program that provides free asbestos collection from households. The program is being implemented as part of our longer term strategy to help reduce illegal dumping in our region.

The program is being provided by ISJO on behalf of three member council areas: Wollongong, Shellharbour and Kiama. It involves offering eligible residents free asbestos collection and disposal on small amounts of loose, non-friable asbestos that they have lying dormant on their residential properties.

Non-friable asbestos cannot be crumbled, pulverised or reduced to powder by hand pressure when dry.

The program began on Thursday 8 July 2021 and is a pilot for regional NSW with funding provided by the NSW EPA waste levy as part of the Waste Less, Recycle More initiative.

People are often unaware of how to correctly dispose of asbestos they have on their property and they have the perception that disposal options are costly. They therefore either leave it sitting around, dump it or chip away at it and dispose of it through their red bin collection service which can then contaminate landfill sites.

Our free disposal initiative aims at reducing the amount of asbestos being illegally dumped in the region while also educating the community about options for safe removal and disposal.

Under the program ISJO is able to arrange for a qualified contractor to collect up to nine (9) square metres of easily accessible, non-friable asbestos that has already been removed from a structure and not disposed of (that is, it was not available for current or future renovations).

The program is being provided at no cost to residents.

The program also provides an opportunity for councils to collect feedback from the community on their knowledge of asbestos collection options, reasons for stockpiling asbestos on their property and disposal intentions.

This pilot project is funded as an NSW EPA “clean up and prevention” grant managed by ISJO.



RESIDENTIAL ASBESTOS DISPOSAL SCHEME

*Talk to us about
your eligibility for*
FREE DISPOSAL

Visit us at
<http://bit.ly/cleanup-isjo>



New spy high mounts for surveillance cameras

Video surveillance is an important tool in detecting and managing illegal dumping activity in bushland areas. For many years rangers have struggled with restrictions when it comes to camera placement in forested areas.

One major problem has been the need to place cameras in high tree locations and the resulting need for most rangers to have a “working with heights” qualification and all the PPE that goes with it.

To address this situation each member Council in our RID (Regional Illegal Dumping) Program has now been supplied with and are trialing a new mounting system from “SpyHigh”.

The SpyHigh Mounting System gives an operator the ability to easily install trail cameras high up in a tree and to manipulate them without ever leaving the ground.

The system’s benefits go beyond ease of access and reduced risk. They also significantly decrease the chance of anyone seeing a camera and vandalizing or stealing it.

The mounting System allows the capture of a wide range of photos and videos whilst leaving the cameras virtually invisible and secure.

Each kit consists of an extension pole which extends from 60cm to 120cm in length and, when connected together, the pole enable users to mount trail cameras up to 4.5 meters off the ground – without having recourse to ladders or any climbing. The special bayonet grip tip connects poles together so they cannot twist or loosen. Tree Attachments click onto extension poles and easily screw into a tree at desired location of camera with a few turns of the pole(s). The tree attachments are made of “Nylon Super-Tough” material and are virtually impossible to destroy, crush, or deform.

Some of our member councils have also expressed a desire to explore the legal use of body-worn cameras by ranger staff. Eurobodalla Shire Council has sought legal advice on their newly developed policy and will share any findings with all member councils. Eurobodalla will also trial the use of several types of cameras and report on their performance.



Did you know....

....that ISJO has four core Member Councils, five councils in the Southern Waste Program (Wollongong, Wingecarribee, Shellharbour, Kiama and Shoalhaven), three Councils for Weeds Management (Wollongong, Shellharbour and Kiama) and eight Councils for the RID (Regional Illegal Dumping) Program (Wollongong, Shellharbour, Kiama, Shoalhaven, Eurobodalla, Bega Valley, Wingecarribee and Wollondilly)

Drone Trial to Control Destructive Weed

This year's Illawarra District Weeds Authority Bitou Bush management program is taking a much more innovative and targeted approach than in previous years. This year we are trialling a targeted surveillance and control program that uses a drone to help manage Bitou Bush: an invasive weed that threatens native plant and animal species and Endangered Ecological Communities along our coast.



Bitou Bush is an aggressive weed in coastal dune and headland vegetation where it can out-compete, and in many cases totally eliminate, the native flora. Bitou Bush forms dense shrub layers which can obscure entire sand dunes and change views of headlands and beaches. The most destructive impact of Bitou Bush is a reduction of coastal biodiversity in infested areas. Bitou Bush is listed as a Weed of National Significance and it is already directly affecting a number of threatened species and plant communities in the Illawarra.

The use of drones is a completely different way to target the plant. Intelligent flight control with the assistance of the on-board technology allows drones to achieve unimaginable precision, giving them the ability to be both targeted and versatile. They are used to map out a target area and then with pinpoint accuracy control the plant via spot spraying. This eliminates the need for

abseilers to spot spray around cliff faces and other hard to reach places. Spray drift becomes minimal due to the precision and targeted accuracy of the drones.

The Weeds Authority 2021 program will continue using traditional control techniques of manual removal, revegetation and ground-based spraying.

The drone technology was trialled along a section of cliff line on vacant Crown Land south of Kiama using Met Mac 600®, a low toxicity unscheduled selective herbicide.

The trial followed a similar program undertaken by MidCoast Council in 2020 which achieved very promising results. The trial took place on 26 October and was completed within one day due to very favourable weather conditions.

Surveillance and control activities such as those undertaken are unlikely to interfere with reserve activities due to the remote nature of the site. Prominent signage and staff on the ground informed any people in the immediate area that the drone activity was taking place.

The work was funded through the NSW Government's Crown Reserves Improvement Fund Program.



Our Core Member Councils:

Wollongong City Council, Shellharbour City Council, Kiama Municipal Council, Shoalhaven City Council

Our Special Program Partners (Southern Waste Group):

Wingecarribee Shire Council

Our Special Program Partners (RID Program):

Eurobodalla Shire Council, Bega Valley Shire Council, Wingecarribee Shire Council and Wollondilly Shire Council