

<b>Circular Details</b>	Circular No 16-52 / 22 December 2016 / A523204
<b>Previous Circular</b>	16-30 Local Government Amendment (Governance and Planning) Act
<b>Who should read this</b>	Mayors / Councillors / General Managers / Council Governance staff
<b>Contact</b>	Council Governance Team / 02 4428 4100
<b>Action required</b>	Response to OLG

## Induction and Ongoing Professional Development for Mayors and Councillors

### What's new or changing

- The recent Phase 1 amendments to the *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act) have seen the inclusion in the prescribed role of councillors under section 232 a responsibility “to make all reasonable efforts to acquire and maintain the skills necessary to perform the role of a councillor”.
- In support of this, the amendments allow regulations to be made for induction and other professional development for Mayors and Councillors.
- The Office has commenced work on the development of these regulations. It is proposed that these will provide as follows:
  - Councils are to develop an induction program for newly elected and returning councillors and a specialised supplementary program for the Mayor to assist them in the performance of their functions to be delivered within six months of their election.
  - Each year, councils are to develop an ongoing professional development program for the Mayor and each Councillor.
  - Councils are to determine the content of the induction and ongoing professional development programs in consultation with the Mayor and each Councillor and with the governing body as a whole.
  - In determining the content of induction and ongoing professional development programs, councils are to have regard to the specific needs of the Mayor, each individual Councillor and the governing body as a whole.
  - Councillors and Mayors must participate in the induction and ongoing professional development training offered to them.
  - Councils are to annually report details of the content of the induction and ongoing professional development training offered to the Mayor and each Councillor and whether or not they participated in it to a council meeting and publish these details in the council’s annual report and on its website unless exempted by the Chief Executive of the Office of Local Government.
  - The Chief Executive of the Office of Local Government may, on an application by a council, exempt the council from the requirement to publish details of training provided to an individual councillor where he or she is satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances.

- The Office will be preparing Guidelines to outline the Government's expectations and to provide assistance to councils in developing the programs. A working group comprising of a number of key sector stakeholder groups will be convened for the purposes of consulting on the content of the Guidelines.

### **What this will mean for your council**

- The Office is seeking comment on the proposed regulations.
- In addition, the Office is seeking comment from individual councils on the following:
  - whether there are any impediments impacting on their capacity to comply with the proposed regulations; and
  - what support would be required for the council to overcome any such impediments.

### **Key points**

- Submissions may be made by email to [olg@olg.nsw.gov.au](mailto:olg@olg.nsw.gov.au).
- Submissions should be labelled "induction and ongoing professional development for Mayors and councillors" and marked to the attention of the Office's Council Governance Team.
- Submissions should be made before close of business **3 February 2017**.

### **Where to go for further information**

- For further information, contact the Office's Council Governance Team on 02 4428 4100.



**Tim Hurst**  
**Acting Chief Executive**