

COMPLIANCE REPORT ASSESSMENT
3rd Compliance Report
Edward River Council

Performance improvement order dated: 22 July 2024

Period for compliance with order: 7 months

First compliance report due 27 August 2024

Date of first compliance report: 26 August 2024

Date of assessment: 30 August 2024

Second compliance report due 24 September 2024 (extension granted to 22 October 2024)

Date of second compliance report: 22 October 2024

Date of assessment: 28 October 2024

Final compliance report due 28 February 2025

Date of second compliance report: 26 February 2025

Date of assessment: 24 March 2025

Terms of the order:

1. Improve council behaviours within ERC meetings and workshops to reflect community standards and ensure compliance of Council's code of meeting practice.
2. Complete councillor training workshops as requested by the Deputy Secretary, Local Government.
3. Identify actions required to be taken to ensure compliance by the councillors with the staff interaction policy. These actions will be informed by the Temporary Adviser.
4. Identify actions that the governing body and councillors need to undertake to ensure compliance with its legislative obligations including Financial Reporting and Integrated Planning and Reporting (End of Term report).

5. Identify actions and strategies to ensure ERC is complying with its obligations under Safe Work NSW, specifically around Councillor/Councillor and Councillor/Staff interactions.
6. Identify actions and strategies to ensure councillors are correctly briefed on the effective operations and relevant activities.
7. Identify actions to deliver and evaluate councillor induction training, including how to respect the principles of political discourse within and outside of council meetings.

Progress report on action required

1. **Improve council behaviours within ERC meetings and workshops to reflect community standards and ensure compliance of Council's code of meeting practice.**

Mr Ferguson has observed considerable improvement in the conduct of council meetings, noting the past six consecutive meetings have been conducted effectively, efficiently and in good spirit, with councillors becoming more confident in asking questions and developing competence in the rules of debate.

2. **Complete councillor training workshops as requested by the Deputy Secretary, Local Government.**

Councillors have participated in various workshops and training as part of the induction process following the September 2024 Local Government elections, including those delivered by consultants, Local Government practitioners, OLG's hit the ground running webinars, the Interim CEO, Council staff and the Temporary Adviser. Mr Ferguson noted that attendance rates at these sessions had been very high, with councillors committing over 86-hours each.

3. **Identify actions required to be taken to ensure compliance by the councillors with the staff interaction policy. These actions will be informed by the Temporary Adviser.**

Council officers, with support from the Temporary Adviser, developed a comprehensive induction program to address this, and other actions described in the PIO. The first workshop following the September 2024 Local Government elections focused on the Councillor/Staff Interaction Policy. There has been a high participation rate amongst councillors with the induction program and associated training and workshops.

4. **Identify actions that the governing body and councillors need to undertake to ensure compliance with its legislative obligations including Financial Reporting and Integrated Planning and Reporting (End of Term report).**

Council officers, with support from the Temporary Adviser, developed a comprehensive induction program to address this, and other actions described in the PIO. A training program addressing Financial Reporting commenced on 22 October 2024, with an initial 2-hour workshop followed by further sessions throughout the induction program, focusing on a thorough overview and understanding of the

Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework. There has been a high participation rate amongst councillors with the induction program and associated training and workshops.

5. **Identify actions and strategies to ensure ERC is complying with its obligations under Safe Work NSW, specifically around Councillor/Councillor and Councillor/Staff interactions.**

On 15 October 2024, a workshop was held for all councillors focusing on the Code of Conduct.

Council acknowledged its role as a PCBU under the Work, Health and Safety Act 2011. A 4-hour workshop on WHS Health and Safety was held on 22 November 2024 for all councillors.

Council made it clear in its 29 October 2024 resolution that Council would not accept nor tolerate behaviour inconsistent with the code of conduct that may be deemed bullying, whether between councillors, or councillors and staff.

6. **Identify actions and strategies to ensure councillors are correctly briefed on the effective operations and relevant activities.**

Council's induction program provided opportunities for councillors to become aware of, learn and appreciate the Edward River region specific subjects that will enable informed decision making. There has been a high participation rate amongst councillors with the induction program and associated training and workshops.

7. **Identify actions to deliver and evaluate councillor induction training, including how to respect the principles of political discourse within and outside of council meetings.**

Council's Interim CEO conducted exit interviews with all but one outgoing councillor. Feedback from these interviews was used to inform focus areas in the induction program.