

News Release **Minister Geoff Brock**

Minister for Regional Development
Minister for Local Government

Thursday, 7 August, 2014

Mandatory training for Council members

Members of local Councils will have to undergo mandatory training after the November 2014 local government elections.

Local Government Minister Geoff Brock today introduced a Bill to State Parliament which will provide for mandatory training for members of local Councils, as well as strengthen the Oath of Office that Councillors must make.

“The proposed amendments to the *Local Government Act 1999* will enhance the significance of the elected members’ declaration on taking office, as well as ensuring Councillors better understand and appreciate their roles and responsibilities,” said Minister Brock.

“These are simple but important measures that have been recommended by the Ombudsman, and have been the subject of extensive consultation.

“The Local Government Association has also specifically requested these measures be introduced in time for the start of the new local government term following the November Council elections.”

Local Government Association President David O’Loughlin said communities have high expectations about the performance and conduct of their council members, so councillors need to have a clear understanding of the roles they play in representing their communities.

“While the requirement for training is not intended to be onerous, it will cover key aspects related to the roles of councillors such as strategic planning, financial and asset management planning and setting budgets and rates,” he said.

Enrolling to vote for the November local Council elections will close at 5.00pm this Friday.

Anyone who has moved house since the last election, or is unsure of whether they are eligible to vote, should fill out an enrolment form, which are available at all Councils.

Nominations for candidates for the Council elections open on Tuesday September 2, and close on Tuesday September 16.

Councils will soon be holding information sessions for prospective candidates. Information about these sessions will be advertised in local newspapers and on Council websites.