THE COUNTRY MAYORS ASSOCIATION OF NSW INC

"What we want is nothing more than equity"

MINUTES

27th March 2026

A General Meeting of the Country Mayors Association of NSW Inc was held in the Theatrette, Parliament House, Macquarie Street, Sydney from 8:20 am until 12:38pm pm. The meeting had a Financial Sustainability theme.

PRESENTATIONS

1. The meeting commenced with a welcome from CMA Chairman Mayor Rick Firman OAM.

2. CMA Memorial for the Bondi Massacre Victims, with four special guests:

- NSW Minister for Regional Transport & Roads: The Hon Jenny Aitchison MP
- NSW Opposition Leader: Ms Kellie Sloane MP (Member for Vaucluse)
- President of LGNSW Mayor Darcy Byrne
- Waverley Council Mayor Will Nemesh

Board and Members stood for a Minute's Silence in Honour of Bondi Massacre Victims

3. Launch of the CMA's Invest in Us campaign and the Rural Health Access Survey Results

CMA Policy Advisor Mrs Julie Briggs and Secretary Ms Melissa Boxall went through the material created for the Invest in Us campaign. They advised that that the material would be available digitally, for Councils to use in social media.
Mrs. Briggs highlighted that the 2025 Auditor General Report was quoted.

Mayor Darcy Byrne said Financial Sustainability is a priority concern for all Councils in NSW. "I appreciate the positive messaging of this campaign but the Federal Government has been dismissive. We need to flip the Government and all Federal Parliamentarians."

"LGNSW will be working with CMA hand in hand on the issue."

Mrs Briggs went through the data from the rural health access survey. She outlined how the data can be pulled out by individual Council or JO or Health District. She explained that logins will be arranged, so members can use that software that the data is organised in.

4. Chairman of the NSW Grants Commission Ms. Linda Scott

Ms Scott introduced her fellow Commission members (pictured on the screen). She paid tribute to the late Mayor Jenny Dowall OAM (Lismore City Council).

"When I arrived in the role (of NSW Grants Commission Chairman) and asked to see the formula, I cannot tell you

how many tabs were in the spreadsheet – it is so complex, it's ridiculous. We are going to improve the formula, transparency and simplicity"
She noted that 25% goes to non-metro councils, based on operational expenditure.
The review will not apply to the next funding round.

Presentation supplied.

4. NSW Shadow Treasurer, The Hon. Scott Farlow MLC

"I sat on the financial sustainability inquiry and I am with you in your fight for more funding/the return to 1%.

There is so much more expected from Local Government in country areas. It is the only visible form of Government in the country. The expectations regarding roads are much greater in the country. The money you need has to come from somewhere and just asking communities for high rates is not the answer.

Depreciation of assets is something we were mindful of the inquiry."

5. NSW Shadow Local Government Minister, Mr Tim James MP

Mr. James began by commending the passion of Mayor Firman.

"Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Local Government Richie Williamson and I are happy for you to reach out to us.
I believe in a decentralised role for Local Government and that Local decisions should be made Locally.

City Councils do not stick to their focus like Country Councils. There are *3,630 kilometres of roads and 671 bridges* connecting MidCoast Council communities mid-coast Council, while North Sydney has 100-150km of roads and a small fraction of the bridges.

Mr James also criticised the OLG, which he said has gone from 45 to 120 staff. What more do they do?

I applaud your (Invest in Us) Campaign.
The Auditor General's 11 high-risk Councils are all regional.
Over a billion dollars is required to update your water infrastructure.

6. Valuer General of NSW, Ms Sally Dale

The NSW Valuer General emphasized that her role (and office) is independent. Ms Dale said that she was a valuer for 30 years and has been in the role for nearly three years. She is happy to visit and talk to Councils. Value NSW has over 300 staff.
There are over 2.7 land values per year. They use a mass-valuation method. It was received objections to valuations are all considered seriously and close to 20 percent do result in re-valuation.

Presentation supplied.

7. Auditor-General for NSW, Mr Bola Oyetunji

Mr Oyetunji said independence allows us to make discoveries.

He reflected on the recent intensive efforts to address the financial sustainability pressures on Local Government in NSW. The Red Fleet, two parliamentary inquiries, we've done what we can.

Audit fees, we're not there yet (as low as desired) but we have capped the fees. Regarding timeliness, we are improving. We are centralising and not waiting until the end of the year for valuations.

Liquidity performance measures – we're working with panel members who know the real world experiences, such as Mayor Phyllis Miller.

We are linking guidelines / reports of best practice with the OLG.

Water is the next crisis. It is important that the financial challenge be addressed holistically.

Presentation supplied.

8. NSW Minister for Roads and Minister for Regional Transport, The Hon Jenny Aitchison MP

The Minister said that she is grateful for the respect and commitment we share for improving the lives of country NSW.

"Mayor Cassandra Coleman (Lithgow City Council) has been a massive champion for that community with the Great Western Highway.
Mayor Steve Allen (Bellingen Shire Council) led a Local Government collaboration with Waterfall Way and Michael Kemp MP and Mayor Nikki Williams from Coffs Harbour also championed that cause – working together on the fragility of the Waterfall Way. Decades of maintenance was not done. Investigations into a permanent fix are ongoing but is a complex location Simply moving Waterfall Way down (as was done in the past) is not possible – we would be in the river. The detour route is funded."

The Auditor General's report gave us a bit of a smack.

We have fuel reserves in Australia, not in the US.

Thanks to Councils who have not been panic buying.
We are meeting regularly for practical solutions – other shortages, like bitumen will impact Councils."
Craig Carmody from the Port of Newcastle was in the room, as the Minister announced $183mil for upgrading roads from the Port of Newcastle to REZs. East to West roads need to be focused on / reinforced.

"CMA helped me to get the disaster recovery funding claims that were bogged down flowing."

There are 19 applications so far for road recatorigisation.

"You are the pulse of NSW. I can't always give you what you want but I will be honest."

9. Morning Tea

Morning Tea was held in a section of the Strangers Dining Room (due to attendance). More than a needed break, cup of coffee and snack, this was a valued networking session between members, as well as a broad cross-section of NSW Parliamentarians. Due to time constraints (resulting from the Bondi memorial) Q&A was not included for the morning speakers but they were available at morning tea.

10. NSW Minister for Finance, Minister for Domestic Manufacturing and Government Procurement, Minister for Natural Resources, The Hon Courtney Houssos MLC

"We appreciate the opportunity to engage with you. I pay tribute to you for the influence you have had in shaping NSW Government Policy. We were on track to return the budget to surplus in two years.

We don't have unlimited funds but by driving savings across the budget can target project spending where it's needed most. We saved $450mil one year and $270mil the next by reducing our contractor costs and doing more in-house.

We continue to reduce red tape with procurement and small business processes.

Communities will need to be supported as coal jobs reduce. The Future Jobs and Investment Authority is being created to assist those communities. We appreciate your input.

Mayor Ndiaye asked about fuel.

Close to 150 petrol stations with dry bowsers.

Mayor Sue Moore asked about Mapping and the Minister promised to get back to her on that.

11. IPART Chairman, Ms Carmel Donnelly PSM

The rate peg updated methodology tailors to each Council. I'm pleased to welcome Julie Briggs representing CMA within IPART's Reference Group.

Current SRV's were covered in her presentation. Thousands of submissions are received regarding SRVs.

There are lots of ways you can get contributions from assessors. We welcome you getting in touch with us, even if you are in early stages of a developer contributions plan. We can recommend in terms of sources of revenue.

Draft review of bulk water services to be released next week. Submissions accepted until May. We have selected Tamworth to do a model for determining per capita costs for water access and waste water.

Presentation supplied.

12. CEO Regional Australia Institute, Ms Liz Ritchie

RAI is there to help you to get the funding investment you need. Regionalisation Ambition 2032 is (as the name of campaign indicates) ambitious. We have to unite as a voice for regional Australia. We are not heard enough at a national level. Less than 20% of migrants reside in rural and regional Australia. We need to get skills into our regions. We need 47% of investment in regional Australia. Toward Net Zero – Energy Co has a plan but it's not quite right. You must be in the driver's seat.

Mayor Julia Ham (Snowy Valleys Council) asked: Sydney waste in a cool climate wine region. How do we push back?

A: It is a vexing issue. Continue to come together, like with CMA, keep the information coming to us. We look at all issues across regional Australia and we can draw our bank of big picture knowledge. Highlight the broader, interconnected impacts.

Presentation supplied.

GENERAL MEETING

1. ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

Attendance

Cr. Bruce Reynolds	Mayor	Blayney Shire Council
Mark Dicker	GM	Blayney Shire Council
David Webb	GM	Hay Shire Council
Cr. Carol Oataway	Mayor	Hay Shire Council
Cr. John Medcalf OAM	Mayor	Lachlan Shire Council
Ian Greenham	GM	Lachlan Shire Council
Cr. Kenrick Winchester	Mayor	Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council
Rebecca Ryan	GM	Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council
Stephen Dunshea	Interim GM	Forbes Shire Council
Cr. Phyllis Miller OAM	Mayor	Forbes Shire Council
Kate Barker	Interim EO	Central NSW JO
Meredith Macpherson		Central NSW JO
Cr. Darrell Tiemens	Mayor	Narrabri Shire Council
John Scarce	GM	Murrumbidgee Council
Cr. Susannah Pearse	Mayor	Moree Plains Shire Council
Natalia Cowley	GM	Moree Plains Shire Council
Cr. Paul Culhane	Mayor	Upper Lachlan Shire Council
Alex Waldron	CEO	Upper Lachlan Shire Council
Leagh-Anne Cosgrove	CMA Scholarship recipient	Upper Lachlan Shire Council
Cr. Daniel Keady	Mayor	Coonamble Shire Council
Greg Hill	GM	Coonamble Shire Council
Cr. Greg Whitely	Mayor	Warren Shire Council
Gary Woodman	GM	Warren Shire Council
Cr. Adam Roberts	Mayor	Port Macquarie Hastings Council
Lisa Miscamble	GM	Wingecarribee Shire Council
Cr. Jesse Fitzpatrick	Mayor	Wingecarribee Shire Council
Cr. Daniel Linklater	Mayor	Wentworth Shire Council
Ken Ross	GM	Wentworth Shire Council
Cr. Julia Ham	Mayor	Snowy Valleys Council
Jessica Quilty	GM	Snowy Valleys Council
Cr. John Harvie	Mayor	Murray River Council
Stacy Williams	CEO	Murray River Council
Linda Scott	Chair	Local Government Grants Commission
Sarah Gubb	Executive Officer	Local Government Grants Commission
Cathy Andre	Commission Assistant	Local Government Grants Commission
Cr. Sharon Cadwallader	Mayor	Ballina Shire Council
Cr. Sue Moore	Mayor	Singleton Council
Justin Fitzpatrick-Barr	GM	Singleton Council
Cr. Melissa Matters	Deputy Mayor	Kiama Council

Jane Stroud	CEO	Kiama Council
Bernard Smith	GM	Glen Innes Severn Council
Cr. Rick Firman OAM	Mayor	Temora Shire Council
Melissa Boxall	GM	Temora Shire Council
Megan Mulrooney	CEO	REROC
Cr. Ray Smith	Mayor	Clarence Valley Council
Cr. Steve Allan	Mayor	Bellingen Shire Council
Mark Griffioen	GM	Bellingen Shire Council
Cr. Kinne Ring	Mayor	Kempsey Shire Council
Andrew Meddle	CEO	Kempsey Shire Council
Cr. Kate Dight	Mayor	Inverell Shire Council
Brett McInnes	GM	Inverell Shire Council
Cr. Jo Williams	Deputy Mayor	Inverell Shire Council
Cr. Nina Dillon	Mayor	Goulburn Mulwaree Council
Scott Gallacher	GM	Goulburn Mulwaree Council
Cr. Nikki Williams	Mayor	Coffs Harbour City Council
Adrian Panuccio	GM	Midcoast Council
Cr. Claire Pontin	Mayor	Midcoast Council
Eric Groth	GM	Gunnedah Shire Council
Laura Black	GM	Clarence Valley Council
Cr. Ewen Jones	Mayor	Narromine Shire Council
Jane Redden	GM	Narromine Shire Council
Julie Briggs	Policy Advisor	CMA
Gary Fry	Secretariat	CMA
Cr. Abb McAlister	Mayor	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council
Roger Bailey	Interim GM	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council
Cr. Lachlan Ford	Mayor	Bourke Shire Council
Leonie Brown	GM	Bourke Shire Council
Cr. Daniel Keady	Mayor	Coonamble Shire Council
Greg Hill	GM	Coonamble Shire Council
Cr. Liam Ley	Deputy Mayor	Dungog Shire Council
Gareth Curtis	GM	Dungog Shire Council
Cr. Russell Fitzpatrick	Mayor	Bega Valley Shire Council
Anthony McMahon	CEO	Bega Valley Shire Council
Cr. Sarah Ndiaye	Mayor	Byron Shire Council
Mark Arnold	GM	Byron Shire Council
Gavin Rhodes	GM	Lockhart Shire Council
Cr. Robert Bell	Mayor	Uralla Shire Council
Toni Averay	GM	Uralla Shire Council
Blake Dyer	Group Manager Community Services	Uralla Shire Council
Cr. Maurice Collison	Mayor	Upper Hunter Shire Council
Greg McDonald	GM	Upper Hunter Shire Council
Ross Gurney	GM	Lithgow City Council
Cr. Cassandra Coleman	Mayor	Lithgow City Council
Cr. Jasmin Jones	Mayor	Yass Valley Council
Peta Gardiner	Acting CEO	Yass Valley Council
Cr. Jarrod Marsden	Mayor	Cobar Shire Council
Cr. Louie Zaffina	Mayor	Balranald Shire Council
Terry Dodds	CEO	Balranald Shire Council

Cr. Lachlan Ford	Mayor	Bourke Shire Council
Leonie Brown	GM	Bourke Shire Council
Luke Ryan	GM	Dubbo Regional Council
Cr. Josh Black	Mayor	Dubbo Regional Council
Cr. Ken Cudmore	Mayor	Liverpool Plains Shire Council
Cian Middleton	GM	Liverpool Plains Shire Council
Cr. Kathryn Rindfleish	Mayor	Warrumbungle Shire Council
Lindsay Mason	General Manager	Warrumbungle Shire Council
Cr. Ashley Hall	Mayor	Edward River Council
Jack Bond	CEO	Edward River Council
Cr. George Weston	Mayor	Leeton Shire Council
Jackie Kruger	GM	Leeton Shire Council
Cr. Lea Parker	Mayor	Greater Hume Council
Dena Vlekkert	GM	Greater Hume Council
Anthony O'Reilly	GM	Hilltops Council
Cr. Claire Pontin	Mayor	Midcoast Council
Brett Stonestreet	Interim CEO	RAMJO
Cr. Cheryl Cook	Mayor	Federation Council
Adrian Butler	GM	Federation Council
Cr. Robert Taylor	Mayor	Bathurst Regional Council
Rachel Anderson	Director Rating & Taxing In House Valuations	Value NSW
Cr. Eric Noakes	Mayor	Walcha Council
Stephen Parry	GM	Walcha Council
Cr. Lisa Minogue	Deputy Mayor	Bland Shire Council
Grant Baker	GM	Bland Shire Council
Danielle Aspery	Senior Manager	TCorp
Craig Selvage	Senior Analyst	TCorp
Tom Threlkeld	Senior Analyst	TCorp
Alina Tee	Analyst	TCorp
Cr. Steve Krieg	Mayor	Lismore City Council
Eber Butron	GM	Lismore City Council
Cr. Russell Webb	Mayor	Tamworth Regional Council
Paul Bennett	GM	Tamworth Regional Council
Cr. Neil Westcott	Mayor	Parkes Shire Council
Cr. Andrew McKibbin	Mayor	Oberon Council
Cr. Katie Graham	Deputy Mayor	Oberon Council
Cr. Darcy Byrne	President	LGNSW
David Reynolds	CEO	LGNSW
David Neeves	GM	Gilgandra Shire Council
Cr. Danielle Mulholland	Mayor	Kyogle Council
Cr. Mathew Hatcher	Mayor	Eurobodalla Shire Council
Mark Ferguson	GM	Eurobodalla Shire Council
Joyce Tapper	Senior Analyst, Local Government.	IPART
Bronwen Sandland	Principal Analyst, Local Government	IPART
Cr. Sam Coupland	Mayor	Armidale Regional Council
Claudia Migotto	Deputy Auditor-General	NSW Audit Office
Cr. Gary Lee	Mayor	Nambucca Valley Council
Bede Spannagle	GM	Nambucca Valley Council
Brad Medina	Assistant Auditor General	NSW Audit Office

Renee O'Kane	Chief of Staff to the Auditor-General - Corporate, Experience and Strategy	NSW Audit Office
John Sevil	GM	Central Darling Shire Council
Cr. Bob Stewart	Chairperson	Central Darling Shire Council
Kate Alberry	Director of Development and Compliance	Narrabri Shire Council
Jonathan Malota	Policy Advisor – Transport & Data	NRMA
Cr. Tricia Hopkins	Deputy Mayor	Snowy Monaro Regional Council
Cr. Chris Hanna	Mayor	Snowy Monaro Regional Council
James Roncon	GM	Armidale Regional Council
Cr. Kevin Beatty	Mayor	Cabonne Shire Council
Cr. Matthew Christenson	Deputy Mayor	Cabonne Shire Council
Murray Wood	GM	Coffs Harbour City Council
Cr. Doug Curran	Mayor	Griffith City Council
Cr. Shari Blumer	Councillor	Griffith City Council
Scott Grant	GM	Griffith City Council
Cr. Tony Mileto	Mayor	Orange City Council
Scott Maunder	CEO	Orange City Council
Cr. Bronwyn Petrie	Mayor	Tenterfield Shire Council
Steph Cooke MP	Member for Cootamundra	NSW Opposition

Apologies

Cr. Neville Kschenka	Mayor	Narrandera Shire Council
Brett Whitworth PSM	Deputy Secretary, Local Government	OLG
Cr. Tiffany Galvin	Mayor	Gwydir Shire Council
Leeah Daley	GM	Gwydir Shire Council
Cr. Paul Smith	Mayor	Cowra Council
Paul Devery	GM	Cowra Council
Cr. Mayor Matt Gould	Mayor	Wollondilly Shire Council
Ben Taylor	CEO	Wollondilly Shire Council
Cr. Ruth McRae OAM	Mayor	Murrumbidgee Council
Cr. Colleen Fuller	Mayor	Gunnedah Shire Council
Cr. Mathew Hatcher	Mayor	Eurobodalla Shire Council
Cr. Adam Shultz	Mayor	Lake Macquarie City Council
Tony Farrell	CEO	Lake Macquarie City Council
Cr. Peter Sharp	Mayor	Lockhart Shire Council
Murray Wood	GM	Coffs Harbour City Council
Jay Nankivell	GM	Broken Hill City Council
Cr. Jim Hickey	Deputy Mayor	Broken Hill City Council
Cr. Julia Cornwell McKean	Mayor	Berrigan Shire Council

Mark Dupé	Interim CEO	Berrigan Shire Council
Cr. Dave McCann	Mayor	Coolamon Shire Council
Tony Donoghue	GM	Coolamon Shire Council
Cr. Kevin Mack	Mayor	Albury City Council
Steve McGrath	Interim CEO	Albury City Council
Gary Wallace	GM	Oberon Council
Cr. Dallas Tout	Mayor	Wagga Wagga City Council
Cr. Paul Best	Mayor	Weddin Shire Council
Matthew Sykes	GM	Weddin Shire Council
Eloise Chaplain	GM	Narrabri Shire Council
Cr. Bob Callow	Mayor	Junee Shire Council

Recommendation: That the apologies be accepted and noted.

Moved by: Mayor Sharon Cadwallader (Ballina Shire)
Seconded by: Mayor John Medcalf OAM (Lachlan Shire)
– carried unanimously.

2. Adoption of Minutes from the 14 November 2025 meeting

Recommendation: **That the 14 November 2025 Minutes be accepted as a true record.**
Moved by: Mayor Sharon Cadwallader (Ballina Shire).
Seconded by: Mayor Kenrick Winchester (Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council)
– carried unanimously.

3. Matters arising from 8 August 2025 Minutes

Nil

4. **CORRESPONDENCE - Since 14 November 2025**

Outward

To	Subject
Hon Chris Minns MP, Premier	Lack of Councillor representation on Local Planning Panels
Hon Kristy Mc Bain, Federal Minister for Local Government	Welcoming the recommencement of the Inquiry into Local Government Financial Sustainability.
Hon Chris Minns MP, Premier	Productivity Commission's Review of GST Distributions
Hon Ryan Park MP, Minister for Health	Letter of Support for Better Care, Closer to Home Alliance's Rural Health Action Plan
Hon Jihad Dib MP Minister for Emergency Services	NSW Government Response to the Parliamentary Inquiry into Assets, premises and funding of the NSW Rural Fire Service

	(RFS)
Hon Tara Moriarity MLC Minister for Agriculture	Expanded Drought Support measures and request for additional measures
Mr. Daniel Cram, Chairman – Little Wings	Invitation to present to CMA members
Ms. Cath Bowtell, Chair – Jobs and Skills Australia's Ministerial Advisory Board	Skill Shortage clarifications
The Hon Andrew Giles MP Federal Minister for Skills and Training	Lack of rural, regional or remote Council representation on the Jobs and Skills Australia's Ministerial Advisory Board
Waverley Council Mayor Will Nemesh	Expressing Bondi condolences from the CMA Board and Members
Waverley Council Mayor Will Nemesh	Invitation to the March 2026 CMA meeting
NSW Deputy Nationals Leader Kevin Anderson MP	CMA congratulating him for his election to Deputy Nationals Leader
Infrastructure NSW CEO Mr. Tom Gellibrand	Invitation to speak at March 2026 meeting
NSW Treasurer the Hon Daniel Mookhey MLC	Invitation to speak at March 2026 meeting
NSW Shadow Treasurer Scott Farlow	Invitation to speak at March 2026 meeting
NSW Emergency Services Minister the Hon Jihad Dib MP	Invitation to speak at March 2026 meeting
NSW Nationals Leader Mr. Gurmesh Singh MP	Gun Law Reforms
NSW Premier the Hon Chris Minns MP	Gun Law Reforms
NSW Opposition Leader Mrs. Kellie Sloane MP	Gun Law Reforms
NSW Opposition Leader Mrs. Kellie Sloane MP	Shadow Cabinet
Shadow Local Government Minister Tim James MP	CMA meeting invitations and issues intro.
Deputy NSW Nationals Leader Mr. Kevin Anderson MP	Condolences for the passing of his wife.
NSW Nationals Leader Gurmesh Singh MP	Invitation to speak at March 2026 meeting
NSW Liberal Leader Kellie Sloane MP	Invitation to speak at March 2026 meeting
NSW Finance Minister Courtney Houssos MLC	Invitation to speak at March 2026 meeting
NSW Shadow Local Government Minister Tim James MP	Invitation to speak at March 2026 meeting
IPART Chair Carmel Donnelly	Invitation to speak at March 2026 meeting
Federal Local Government Minister the Hon Catherine King	Invitation to speak at March 2026 meeting
Regional Australia Institute CEO Liz Ritchie	Invitation to speak at March 2026 meeting
NSW Opposition Leader Mrs. Kellie Sloane MP	Shadow Parliamentary Secretaries
NSW Nationals Leader Mr. Gurmesh Singh MP	Shadow Parliamentary Secretaries
NSW Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Local Government, Mr. Richie Williamson	Shadow Parliamentary Secretaries
NSW Premier the Hon Chris Minns MP	Emergency Services Levy
NSW Treasurer the Hon Daniel Mookhey MLC	Emergency Services Levy
NSW Emergency Services Minister the Hon Jihad Dib MP	Emergency Services Levy
Minister for Agriculture The Hon Tara Moriarty MLC	NSW Government Drought response
IPART CEO Mr Andrew Nicholls *PSM*	CMA representation on IPART's Council Reference Group (CRG) - agreed
NSW Premier the Hon Chris Minns MP	Waterfall Way lasting fix needed

NSW Minister for Roads and Minister for Regional Transport, the Hon. Jenny Aitchison MP	Waterfall Way lasting fix needed
NSW Minister for Small Business, Minister for Recovery, and Minister for the North Coast, the Hon. Janelle Saffin MP	Waterfall Way lasting fix needed
NSW Shadow Minister for Regional Transport and Roads, the Hon. Paul Toole MP	Waterfall Way lasting fix needed
Director of the Stable Group, Mr. Ken Gillespie AC, DSC, CSM	Advising that the CMA cannot promote one consultancy over others
IPART CEO Mr. Andrew Nicholls	Appreciation for CMA inclusion in the IPART the Council Reference Group, acceptance of the CMA Policy Advisor for that and for agreeing to notify each Council in writing of their rate peg figure.
Dolly Parton Imagination Library	Letter of Support
Cowra Shire Mayor Paul Smith	Responding to objections to the planning reforms and outlining the CMAs advocacy on the matter.

Inwards

From	**Note / Action**
Greater Hume Council	Code of Meeting Practice
Glen Innes Severn Council Mayor Margot Davis	Planning Reforms
Central Darling Council	Notification of CMA contact updates
Mr. Alex Dahlenburg, A/ General Manager	Reactions to PFAS Inquiry recommendations
Albury City Council	Notification of CMA contact updates
Cr. Rob Amos Chairman – Rural Councils Victoria	Thanking CMA for its' support
NSW Opposition Leader Mrs. Kellie Sloane MP	The Shadow Cabinet reshuffle and CMA's disappointment that Local Government is not a stand-alone port folio.
NSW Nationals Leader Mr. Gurmesh Singh MP	The Shadow Cabinet reshuffle and CMA's disappointment that Local Government is not a stand-alone port folio.
Waverley Council Mayor Will Nemesh	Thanking the CMA for its' support
Acting GM, Temora Shire Council, Elizabeth Smith	Advocacy request regarding M&F funding delay
NSW Farmers President Xavior Martin	Primary Production Land Tax Exemptions – NSW Farmers position
Prime Minister the Hon Anthony Albanese MP	Update that they are still considering which CMA event to attend.
Mid North Coast and New England Mayors	Joint Statement regarding Waterfall Way

Australian Minister for Skills and Training the Hon Andrew Giles MP	Jobs and Skills Australia Board and CMA engagement
Glen Innes Severn Council Mayor Margot Davis	Advocacy for Sustainable Funding for Rural and Regional Water Supplies
Bourke Shire Council Mayor Lachlan Ford	CMA-National Parks MoU proposal
IPART CEO Mr Andrew Nicholls *PSM*	CMA representation on IPART's Council Reference Group (CRG) – Request approved
NSW Premier the Hon Chris Minns MP	PRRRAC additional members
President of the Murray Darling Association Cr. Shari Blumer	Seeking to speak to the CMA. **Recommendation in General Business.**
Minister for Agriculture The Hon Tara Moriarty MLC	NSW Government Drought response
Prime Minister the Hon. Anthony Albanese	Confirmation that they are still working on getting to a CMA event in 2026
NSW Minister for Roads and Minister for Regional Transport, the Hon. Jenny Aitchison MP	Response re Regional and Local Roads Repair Program. Regional Emergency Road Repair Fund expanded.
Cowra Shire Council Mayor Paul Smith	Requesting CMA advocacy against the NSW Government Planning reforms. **Refer to Policy Advisor report.**
REROC CEO Megan Mulrooney	Response to House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Development - LG Funding and Fiscal Sustainability.
Byron Shire Mayor Sarah Ndiaye	Letter to Minister Hoenig re Remote Participation in Council Meetings. **CMA working with Minister Hoenig on this.**
NSW Health Minister the Hon. Ryan Park	Response to CMA letter of support for Dr. McGirr's Rural Health Action Plan
Cobar Shire Mayor and Chair of the Western Alliance of Councils, Cr. Jarrod Marsden	The need for western / remote Council representation on the Local Government Expert Advisory Panel Recommendation in General Business.
Peter McKechnie AFSM Deputy Commissioner Strategic Capability NSW Rural Fire Service	Inviting the CMA Executive &/or Board to meet with the RFS on the outcomes of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) Inquiry into the assets, premises and funding of the RFS. **Recommendation in General Business.**
Head of Policy & Government Relations for Royal Far West, Jenny Stevenson	Royal Far West 2030 strategy
NSW Emergency Services Minister the Hon Jihad Dib MP	Responding to CMA correspondence re the Red Fleet. Audit now to be completed by end of 2026.
NSW Planning Minister the Hon Paul Scully	Responding to CMA advocacy regarding the planning reforms

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Recommendation: **That the correspondence be received and noted.**
Moved by: Mayor Danielle Mulholland (Kyogle Council).
Seconded by: Mayor Cheryl Cook (Federation Council)
– carried unanimously.

5. MEDIA RELEASES

NSW Country Mayors congratulate new Nationals leadership team

Country Mayors draw out political big guns

NSW Country Mayors Welcome Reopening of Inquiry

Country Mayors renew vows with LGNSW

Eugowra people, Cabonne Council honoured for Inland Tsunami response

COUNTRY MAYORS AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT NSW – A BIG WEEK OF COLLABORATION

CMA backs Dr. McGirr's Rural Health Action Plan

No quick fix for NSW Red Fleet Ownership

NSW Country Mayors react to Bondi shooting

Legislation on Guns and Public Assembly too Rushed

NSW Country Mayors react to new look State Shadow Ministry

VALE DAME MARIE BASHIR

CMA discusses GST Review with NSW Premier and Treasurer

Welcome recognition for country NSW Council luminaries

CMA and NSW Emergency Services Minister progress Red Fleet issue

Emergency Services Levy a NSW Government responsibility

NSW Government drought response a good start

NSW Country Mayors welcome LG Expert Advisory Panel

NSW Premier and Country Mayors brainstorm

NSW COUNTRY MAYORS: TIME FOR NSW TO GET ITS' FAIR SHARE OF THE GST

NSW Country Mayors mourn Ray Donald OAM

Recommendation:	**That the media releases be received and noted.**
Moved by:	Mayor John Harvie (Murray River Council)
Seconded by:	Mayor Danielle Mulholland (Kyogle Council).

– carried unanimously.

6. REPORTS

Report from CMA Chairman Mayor Rick Firman OAM

Recommendation: **That the Report be received and noted.**
Moved by: Mayor Danielle Mulholland (Kyogle Council).
Seconded by: Mayor Sharon Cadwallader (Ballina Shire)

– carried unanimously.

Finance Report – Ms. Melissa Boxall (CMA Secretary)

Recommendation: **That the Report be received and noted, as read.**
Moved by: Mayor Paul Culhane (Upper Lachlan Shire).
Seconded by: Mayor Kenrick Winchester (QPRC)
– carried unanimously

Report from the President of ALGA, Mayor Matt Burnett

Recommendation: **That the Report be received and noted, as read.**
Moved by: Mayor Paul Culhane (Upper Lachlan Shire).
Seconded by: Mayor Cheryl Cook (Federation Council)
– carried unanimously.

Report from President of LGNSW – Mayor Darcy Byrne

Mayor Byrne spoke to his report:

Mayor Byrne advised of a Webinar on Wednesday 1 April regarding Fuel supply. He encourage members to register.
I had a meeting with Minister Hoenig about the Code of Meeting Practice and he accepts that there may be need for some improvements but he wants proposals, not complaints. It does seem to be excessive to be banning remote participation , especially for remote Councils.

Recommendation: **That the Report be received and noted.**
Moved by: Mayor John Medcalf OAM (Lachlan Shire Council).
Seconded by: Mayor Danielle Mulholland (Kyogle Council).
– carried unanimously.

Policy Advisor's Report – Mrs. Julie Briggs

Recommendation: **That the Report be received and noted and that the recommendations therein be endorsed.**

Moved by: Mayor Paul Culhane (Upper Lachlan Shire).
Seconded by: Mayor Danielle Mulholland (Kyogle Council).
– carried unanimously.

Business with Notice

a) Patrons of the Country Mayors Association of NSW

CMA Board Recommendation: that the following three former CMA Chairmen be endorsed as inaugural Patrons of the Country Mayors Association of NSW

- ***Emeritus Mayor Ken Keith OAM (Parkes Shire)***
- ***Emeritus Mrs Katrina Humphries (Moree Plains Shire)***
- ***Emeritus Mayor Jaime Chaffey MP (Gunnedah Shire)***

And further that a suitable presentation be made to each.

Moved by: Mayor Sharon Cadwallader (Ballina Shire).
Seconded by: Mayor John Medcalf OAM (Lachlan Shire Council
– carried unanimously.

Mayor Mulholland asked if there will be a cap on Patron numbers.
Mayor Firman that that can be teased out in future reviews of the Constitution.

b) CMA Board is seeking formal endorsement of the Members for the following adopted Board resolutions:

i) Taxi Services
That given the impracticality of Uber in rural and remote communities, the lack of taxis and their importance to those communities, that the CMA Board advocates to the NSW Regional Transport and Roads Minister for substantially decreased costs for taxi operators in rural and remote NSW. (Narromine Shire)

ii) Local Government Expert Advisory Panel
That the CMA Board write to NSW Local Government Minister, the Hon Ron Hoenig MP, requesting that he consider a position for the Chairman of the Western Division of Councils to sit on the Minister Expert Advisory Panel. (Cobar Shire)

iii) Engagement and Consultation during Policy Development by NSW Government
That the CMA Board write to the NSW Premier, the Hon Chris Minns MP, respectfully requesting that enhanced levels of engagement/consultation by the NSW Government occur during policy development, which is specific to our rural, remote and regional Member Councils. (CMA Board)

iv) Local Government – Stand Alone Minister
That the CMA Board write to both the NSW Premier and the NSW Opposition Leader, requesting a commitment to a stand-alone Local Government portfolio.

v) Financial Sustainability
That the CMA Board write to the NSW Premier, NSW Opposition Leader, NSW Minister and Shadow Ministers for Local Government, requesting details on what is being done to address the financial sustainability crisis impacting rural, remote and regional NSW Councils.

and further

That the CMA Chairman and LGNSW President seek an urgent meeting with the NSW Minister for Local Government and the Shadow Minister for Local Government, to amplify the seriousness of the situation confronting the CMA Member Councils.

Recommendation: That the CMA Members endorse the Board resolutions listed above.

Mayor Winchester suggested that we only need to write to the Opposition Leader but Mayor Firman clarified that we still want the Premier to confirm a stand alone port folio will continue.

Moved by: Mayor Jarrod Marsden (Cobar Shire).
Seconded by: Mayor Nina Dillon (Goulburn Mulwaree Council)
– carried unanimously.

Urgent business without notice

Nil

Without any further business, Chairman, Mayor Firman declared the CMA General Meeting closed at 12:38 pm

The next CMA meeting will be **8 May 2026**, in the NSW Parliament House Theatrette – 8:20am-1:45pm.

Theme: Skill Shortages, Labour Solutions

A tutorial on accessing the data from the CMA-RDN Rural Health Access Survey will be the final session of the meeting, for those who can stay on.