

*It is interesting to compare what is happening here with the stated intention of asset protection zones according to the Rural Fire Services Standards for Asset Protection Zones (APZ). This is where the RFS regulations really fail, they are applying "Rural" concepts to heavily settled areas which have old and unfettered land titles bestowing common-law rights of beneficial use and enjoyment of the entire land area to the property owner. Our understanding of common-law relating to nuisance and danger presented by the escape of dangers from adjacent volatile land holding impose liabilities for the escape of those dangers on the owners of those lands regardless of their negligence or the "coming to the danger" by the injured party.*

*Areas around angophora reserve have in recent times been declared "Bushfire Prone Areas" recently built or altered houses have been forced to comply with special building codes for those areas which supposedly render them less susceptible to fire, but very many of the original unmodified houses and outbuildings remain. The present plan from council treats the asset protection zone requirements of both classes of housing stock as being the same. Clearly this is a seriously unaddressed problem. There could be anything up to a tenfold difference in the APZ requirements of the two classes of housing stock.*

*RURAL and country concepts are being applied to densely built suburban areas apparently with absolutely NO generally available land use and density similar supporting science.*

*10/50 Code of Practice - this one is well summed up by Jim Hacker, fictional Minister for Administrative Services in the television series 'Yes Minister': "There are times in a politician's life when he is obliged to take the wrong decision. Wrong economically, wrong industrially, wrong by any standards – except one". It is a curious fact that something which is wrong from every other point of view can be right politically. Under this code of practice your property can be alienated with absolutely NO safety benefit to you or your neighbours or even the thing it claims to protect. A wrong call on protection here and we lose the lot.*

*Acts and Regulations - it is interesting to search the acts and regulations for the words "Asset Protection Zones" our searches got no hits, this seems very strange indeed. While the RFS does a brilliant job in handling rural fire situations thanks to its massive volunteer force of very brave fire fighters who selflessly and fearlessly give of themselves to the point exhaustion and collapse (and sometime even death) when catastrophe calls.*

*The RFS management has been given the impossible task of protecting us, virtually with one hand tied behind their backs by environmental constraints that prevent full implementation of the protective measures that the applicable fire science would call for. This impacts on their own brave people, making their work even more difficult and dangerous. It also denies us all the full measure of fire safety we should be entitled to. Especially in heavily settled non-rural suburban areas.*

*Australian native trees are said to be forged in fire and are genetically disposed to a point of having a vested interest in fire to eliminate competitive species and come to dominate the landscape. Seemingly what are often called threatened species people would have us protect from fire are probably fire intolerant visitor species that would not survive the usual Australian bushfire happenings. There is little point at putting our lives at risk over this, and of course too little proper protection, could, by increasing the local fuel load, result in potential loss of human life along with incineration of the protected. So then we lose the lot. We need a new system for RFS bushfire protection requirements assessment. We'd suggest it contains all calculations based solely on science and constraining all protective measures for adjacent properties and life to be fully within the area of the hazard and ignoring any environmental concerns. This makes a good starting point for the negotiation of compromises that can do nothing but takeaway from the protection of people's lives and property.*

Suburban green-spaces really need some proper science to justify 100 metres of "bushfire prone area" around them. Using rural rules based on bad road access, no redundant escape paths and lack of pressurised and abundant water and no local hoses is seemingly inappropriate and costly for all concerned. Once you get to a point where your neighbour is a similar fire danger to a bushfire the bushfire zone should end, the area becomes business-as-usual suburban fire risk. Garden hoses are reputed to be able to handle pretty serious ember showers from suburban greenspace fires. A fire in the house next door is entirely another matter.

The 2012 bushfire prone land change map illustrates the subjectivity in the problem: Yellow areas are freshly added; Blue areas have been deleted. Many BFPL zoned houses have close neighbours not zoned bushfire prone but also have a street frontage separating them from the hazard. This map also shows up inconsistencies and seeming abilities to 'opt out'. The Council page indicates that a review of bushfire prone lands took place in 2012, apparently without individual notification to affected residents.

Pittwater's 2002 Plan of Management for the reserve - this plan contains some historical information on the reserve. Much of this information is over 12 years old and describes conditions that existed at that time.

Other Resident Observations - The almost unreadable wall of text contained in the council's version of the meeting minutes is a real tribute to council's documentary skills and desire to effectively communicate. From the minutes it is interesting to note the paucity of the reporting of the public comments: The reported resident comment was as we recall from a local praising the prompt attention some relative in the mountains got when they reported a fire hazard next door. This was the only resident comment mentioned in the minutes: "One resident commented that she really appreciated everything the RFS and Council have done regarding the preparation of this important Plan".

The audience comments bemoaning the lack of documentation supporting the size and placement of the asset protection zones went essentially unreported and were vaguely addressed in the RFS speakers comments in that all this was done without detailed inspection, just relying on councils topographic map and claims for vegetation types as inputs. It was also pointed out by residents that at the up-slope southern end of the reserve where the shown reserve APZ diminishes to almost nothing against rock cliffs potential hot-air ember chimneys are created that would direct embers skyward and to a great height.

Still to this day exactly how all this was determined remains a mystery. It would appear that imagined environmental concerns predominate over life and property in the current RFS regime and is heading the NSW RFS in the direction that caused the massive problems in Victoria some years ago.

It was interesting that the question: Are our backyards still an APZ? Met the following answer - Yes, under the Warringah Pittwater BFRMP however the APZ on your property will be removed from being indicated on the draft Plan.

It would seem that at some past time and without any resident consultation there were asset protection zones unilaterally declared over areas of our private properties. This is an issue that must be revisited as a proper asset protection zone in the reserve is completely bi-directional in that the housing side of this APZ has the lowest fire threat level and therefore the APZ protects the reserve from house fires as much as it protects the houses from the more probable fire threat contained in the reserve.

*The original Angophora proposal map showing the extent of the asset protection zones (marked in orange) that the RFS and council claim were put onto and still exist over local properties, these in many cases cover existing assets and houses and make a mockery of the words 'Asset Protection Zone'. Rebuilding or altering a house on your own land but within a bushfire prone land asset protection zone or even using the land within the dimensions shown in the land title deed for habitable space places owners in approval situations with impossibilities, complications and expenses far beyond those encountered to do the same thing on land only declared 'Bushfire Prone' but not within an inflicted APZ (refers to RFS Bush Fire Prone Lands Kit).*

*In as far as the regulations prohibit either Council or RFS declaring APZs over property bordering developments we would contend that the proposed regeneration works in the reserve constitute a development (in that it significantly changes the reserve flora, its locations, its flammability and the ember and fire risk to neighbours) and therefore declaring APZs over adjacent properties is not in accordance with the applicable rules or even basic common tort law where threats and nuisance to adjacent properties become a serious legal liability to the owner of the danger and must be contained.*

*Even the state government has a problem with this excessive environmental trend, some would say they have left Dracula looking after the blood bank. Media Release (Thursday 29 May 2014) New Laws To Protect Property From Bushfires suggest that this is a massive waste of the scarce time and money resources of the RFS. This probably could be better handled without any involvement of the RFS and should allow any resident anywhere to serve notice on their local council that they propose to clear some vegetation for asset protection purposes. Council refusal of all or part of the proposal should bring with it the same liabilities for council as refusal to allow the removal of a dangerous tree. RFS involvement brings with it some really cloudy legal liability issues to do with property ownership rights, use rights and the long established common law right to have the property safe from the escape of dangers from adjacent lands. When people move to a tree change location they are often oblivious of the extent of the fire threat they face if they wish to use the full area of the property they purchased. The need to remove trees and vegetation to assure their own safety often comes as a great disappointment. This and the original lifestyle reason for the tree change generally ensure they will remove as little as possible to assure safety.*

*It could be that the short response time window we've been given on the Angophora plans has something to do with the review of the laws giving property owners more power to manage their own affairs. It could be that since many of the properties bordering Angophora have survived without problems for almost a century the proposed "nanny state" intervention in residentially bordered suburban green spaces is a total "overkill" and is supported by little empirical evidence of a problem that needs addressing in a manner applicable in areas that have no escape routes, bad roads, no high pressure fire hydrant water points and are very remote from rapid response emergency services.*

*We would also suggest that much of the perceived problem could be eliminated by placing a mains pressure sprinkler system in the reserve, this could potentially eliminate massive legal liabilities and maintenance costs for council and the alienation of resident private landholding areas. Under this scenario everyone becomes a winner, even the green-space. Properly done this eliminates the need for "bushfire prone land zones" around relatively minor greenspace land areas and the massive extra costs they bring to local residential housing construction.*

*This angophora matter has no great urgency and the RFS twenty eight day urgency window for comment is utterly preposterous in view of the voluminous documentation and many claimed applicable references at the end of the document. These many references are not individually cited during the discourse in the body of the text as is usual in competent scholarly works, this in our opinion gives the whole document and its bibliography an air of unreliability that calls for a serious investigation of the actual facts and the real underlying agenda.*

*Fire is an issue that for past decades has been totally ignored by council and thankfully has been well managed to now by intelligent resident husbandry of the area. There were times when firebugs were active in the blackberry and lantana, the fires were quelled with garden hoses and resident removal of the fuel source put an end to the problem.*

*How Council turned this into an adversarial situation - Following the 2013 survey of the bounds of the reserve council officers/workers set about killing all the grass on asset protection zone border side of many properties without any consultation with the adjacent property owners.*

*The result of this was a huge regrowth of really volatile weeds in the asset protection zones in the reserve, some of these weeds were up five feet high. It was really a pity that new council officers completely devoid of any knowledge of the area history were deployed to set about making a lot of work and expense for council by not taking advantage of all the local knowledge and excellent work that the neighbours bordering the reserve had put into suppression of undesirable plants and the creation of asset protection zones over the forty or so years that the local council showed little interest in the area or its fire safety. Due to financial pressures not a lot in the 2002 plan of management was accomplished by council. Not a lot has changed they are still crying poor-mouth, even in a lot of core areas of responsibility.*

*According to long standing residents forty years ago one could walk from the back of the houses surrounding the reserve down to the waterfall area. The story goes that up until about twenty years ago years ago all sorts of undesirable plant invaded the reserve and forced the residents surrounding the reserve to remove cotoneaster, privet, lantana, blackberries and other undesirable plants. The present good condition of the reserve owes a lot to bordering resident husbandry.*

*The recent threat by council officers in the minutes is adding real fuel to the adversarial appearance of this situation: "Without the draft Plan adopted, Council could regenerate the mown areas within the reserve if they wish to. It must be noted, that the draft Plan is an advantage to adjoining residents not a limitation."*

*Just how one could go about so-called regeneration so close to residential properties without creating a massive bushfire danger due to the volatility and massive ember potential of the many infant plants that would be needed seems to have escaped all those supposed to be looking the safety of our lives, our property and the welfare of our local green-spaces.*

#### Response

Concerns were raised in relation to relevant NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) legislation, some of which is outside the scope of this Plan. This submission has been referred to the Warringah Pittwater District Office of the Rural Fire Service for further comment.

Council also has concerns applying bush fire codes and guidelines in urban areas where they may not be appropriate, however this is State legislation which Council must comply with. The RFS legislation is generic and does not address site specific issues. Developing this site specific bush fire management plan is one of several Bush Fire Management Committee wide treatments identified in the Warringah Pittwater Bush Fire Risk Management Plan 2009. This Plan aims to find a balance between environmental protection and reducing the bush fire risk to life and property.

#### *RFS Standards for Asset Protection Zones (APZ)*

There has been confusion generated by the use of the term Asset Protection Zone within the Plan, this will now be known as Defendable Space. This is to differentiate it from the requirements of *Planning for Bushfire Protection 2006* which is the guideline used to manage bush fire associated with new development. It should be noted, that land management agencies are neither required nor responsible for the provision of Asset Protection Zones on their land to meet the requirements of *Planning for Bush Fire Protection 2006* on private property.



As outlined in the Plan, Council will maintain existing areas of Defendable Space as well as manage the reserve to provide 20 metres of Defendable Space from the rear of a residential dwelling, where it extends into the reserve. Defendable Space provides an area in which a person can undertake property protection after the passage of fire. Defendable Space shown on the Map-based Plan is already maintained to some extent with reduced fuel and mown areas. Council will maintain remaining fuel loads in line with the *NSW RFS Standards for Asset Protection Zones 2005*.

You pointed out that APZs, or now Defendable Space, diminishes to almost nothing against rock cliffs. It must be noted that an APZ or Defendable Space cannot be provided on slopes over 18 degrees. Outside of these areas of Defendable Space, Council will manage fuels using a mosaic fire regime and where necessary manual hazard reduction to reduce the impacts of a potential wildfire. Areas of Defendable Space have been established as directed by the district Rural Fire Service.

### *Acts and Regulations*

Although not relevant to this Plan, The Pittwater Bush Fire Prone Land Map 2012 was reviewed in accordance with the *NSW RFS Guidelines for Bush Fire Prone Land Mapping 2006*. The extent of vegetation considered bush fire prone was re-mapped to accommodate changes from the 2004 mapping which is why some properties were added or removed from the map you refer to in your submission. All owners of properties identified as bush fire prone, including newly affected properties, were notified in writing at the time of review prior to public exhibition in February 2012.

Anyone purchasing a property on bush fire prone land receives a Section 149 Certificate which includes a notification to inform them of the bush fire threat on their property – refer to Attachment 1a. No land is being alienated, bush fire prone land mapping is a legislative planning requirement imposed on Council. The 2012 Bush Fire Prone Land Change map shows the entire property even if it was only partially enclosed by the bush fire prone land buffer.

In regard to existing and future development on private property, this Plan is to manage the current risk, not risk to any future development. New development will be assessed as part of that development application process. Any development application will need to meet the “in-fill” requirements of *Planning for Bush Fire Protection 2006* which also determines the extent of an APZ to occur on private property. The extent of an APZ on private property is not determined by Council or the district RFS.

Council has no requirement to provide adjacent residents with an APZ to meet their planning requirements. As previously suggested the onus for APZs generally cannot be placed on an adjoining land owner. Development can still occur in an APZ on private property provided the requirements of *Australian Standard 3959-2009 - Construction of buildings in bushfire prone areas* is met in accordance with the determined Bushfire Attack Level. This is currently the situation for properties adjoining the reserve.

It must be noted, that there are areas of encroachment within the reserves, particularly above the escarpment along Bilwara Avenue which extends far beyond the necessary Defendable Space requirements within the reserve. An APZ or Defendable space is not just mown land areas and may consist of maintained vegetation. Councils aim when removing some lawn areas, was to re-establish some bushland above the escarpment. If a resident believes there is a potential fire hazard, they can contact the district RFS who will undertake an inspection and notify Council if any works are required.

### *Previous plans, minutes, meeting and exhibition period*

You drew attention to historical information taken from the Angophora Reserve Plan of Management 2002 which is over 12 years old. This information has been reviewed to ensure it is relevant to the current state of the Reserve.

The minutes from the public meeting were not intended to be a word for word account; instead Council aims to capture and address common themes that arise at these public meetings.

The public exhibition period of 28 days and submission period of 48 days is consistent with the NSW *Local Government Act 1993*. The public exhibition and submission period was extended by 14 days following changes to the Map-based Plan to allow further review and comment by the public. The plan has been on exhibition for a minimum of six weeks. This in most cases seems a substantial period of time and above the usual exhibition period.

The Plan will be reported to Council in its standard format; a summary of issues raised in submissions will also be provided. An Analysis of Submissions will be available on Councils website to ensure the community has access to submissions if they wish.

#### *Council's role in bush fire management*

The bush fire management plan seeks to manage all the risks, these include; bushland risk, environment constraints, geotechnical risks etc. Angophora Reserve is a bushland reserve and Council has a responsibility to manage the bush fire issue in balance with competing issues.

Council in consultation with the district RFS has always, and continues to maintain fuel loads in Angophora Reserve. Manual hazard reduction works are undertaken within Angophora Reserve annually to maintain Defendable Space areas, reduce fuel and prepare areas of the Reserve for hazard reduction burning. In Pittwater, Council undertakes substantial works on a yearly basis with; developing and accessing broad acre burns on public lands, preparing for these burns, undertaking manual hazard reduction, preparation of bush fire management plans of which there are five across Council's largest reserves, providing rural fire service brigade stations, developing mapping (based on RFS guidelines) and developing and implementing specific plans etc. Last year alone hazard reduction works covered 61 hectares throughout the LGA, 5.3 hectares within Angophora Reserve.

You referred to the following comment from the meeting minutes, *"Without the draft Plan adopted, Council could regenerate the mown areas within the reserve if they wish to. It must be noted, that the draft Plan is an advantage to adjoining residents not a limitation"*. There was no intent to "threaten" anyone, the Council Officer indicated the issues that have occurred in nearby locations and that the Plan may assist in reducing future issues.

The new laws regarding the NSW 10/50 Vegetation Clearing Code of Practice provide for landowners to undertake works on their own property if they wish, it is an entitlement not an obligation.

For any outstanding issues regarding your submission on E4 zoning please contact Councils Planning and Assessment unit on 9970 1111.

## **Attachment 1a – Section 149 Certificate Bush Fire Prone Lands**

The current wording on 149 Certificates for bush fire prone land,

### **Bushfire Hazard/Risk**

This land is identified on a Bush Fire Prone Land map certified by the Commissioner of the NSW Rural Fire Service as being bush fire prone land as per the Rural Fires and Environmental Assessment Legislation Amendment Act 2002 No 67. The requirements of the NSW Rural Fire Service document *Planning for Bushfire Protection* apply to this land. For further information please contact Warringah Pittwater District Rural Fire Service.

And if the whole property is affected:

All the land the subject of this certificate is identified on a Bush Fire Prone Land map certified by the Commissioner of the NSW Rural Fire Service as being bush fire prone land as per the Rural Fires and Environmental Assessment Legislation Amendment Act 2002 No 67.

And if only part of the land is affected the certificate also states:

Part of the land the subject of this certificate is identified on a Bush Fire Prone Land map certified by the Commissioner of the NSW Rural Fire Service as being bush fire prone land as per the Rural Fires and Environmental Assessment Legislation Amendment Act 2002 No 67.

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<b>C10.5</b>	<b>Minutes of the Sydney Coastal Councils Group Annual General Meeting of 13 September 2014</b>
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**Meeting:** Natural Environment Committee

**Date:** 3 November 2014

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**STRATEGY:** Beach & Coastal Management

**ACTION:** Strategic Initiative - Partner with other councils, SCCG and Catchment Management Authorities to integrate and complement regional initiatives

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## **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To advise Council of the Minutes of the Sydney Coastal Councils Group (SCCG) Annual General Meeting held on 13 September 2014 and hosted by Randwick Council at the Prince Henry Centre.

### **1.0 BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 The SCCG is a forum to promote co-ordination between the 15 member councils on environmental issues relating to the sustainable use and management of the Sydney urban coastal environment.

### **2.0 ISSUES**

#### **2.1 Item 7 – Annual Elections**

The annual election of an executive committee for the SCCG was conducted at the AGM with the following results:

Position	Name	Council
Chairperson	Cr Geoff Stevenson	Randwick
Vice Chairperson (Ocean Council)	Cr Cathy Griffin	Manly
Vice Chairperson (Estuarine Council)	Cr Lynne Saville	Willoughby
Treasurer (Honorary)	Cr Peter Towell	Sutherland
Secretary (Honorary)	Cr Leon Goltsman	Waverley
Member	Cr Irene Doutney	City of Sydney
Member	Cr Selena Griffith	Pittwater
Member	Cr Greg Levenston	Woollahra

#### **2.2 Item 10.5 – NSW Shark Meshing Program**

Delegates considered a submission to the SCCG from Manly Council which sought support for a review of the NSW Shark Meshing Program at the end of the 2014 swimming season. Manly Council would like the NSW Government to consider a reduction in beach meshing days each year as well as non-lethal alternatives to shark meshing.

The Full Group resolved that:

- 1) The address by Cr Bingham be received and noted.
- 2) The SCCG write to DPI requesting a full report on the NSW Shark Meshing Program, including the science behind it and considerations and current research activities looking at alternative risk management strategies to netting and culling.
- 3) That DPI be asked to present this report at the December meeting of the SCCG.

### 2.3 Item 12 – General Business

A high level of concern had been expressed by Technical Committee representatives in regard to the 10/50 Vegetation clearing Code of Practice. Full Group delegates considered the matter, expressed similar concerns and made the following resolution:

Resolved that the SCCG write to the Premier/Minister and relevant agencies recommending:

- 1) A suspension of the 10/50 Code until a review is undertaken.
- 2) Comprehensive mapping of the clearing entitlement areas in the LGA be made publicly available, including the criteria for defining such areas (with all mapping being ground truthed).
- 3) A scientific review into the ecological impacts and actual bushfire hazard reduction benefits of these provisions, across urban and non-urban areas and/or local and regional scales.
- 4) A process under which local councils can seek to opt out of some or all of the provisions of the 10/50 Code.
- 5) A detailed public education process be undertaken to clarify what is and what is not permissible and associated consequences for illegal actions and other useful public compliance, management and further information details.

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### 3.0 SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT

No sustainability assessment required

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### 4.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The minutes of each Sydney Coastal Councils Group meeting are reported for the information of Council at the request of the SCCG Executive Committee.

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### RECOMMENDATION

1. That the Minutes of the SCCG Annual General Meeting of 13 September 2014 (appended as **Attachment 1**) be noted.
2. That the SCCG concerns raised and position on the 10/50 Vegetation Clearing Code of Practice is fully supported and complements Council's stated position on this matter.

Report prepared by  
Paul Hardie, Principal Officer – Coast & Estuary

Jennifer Pang  
**MANAGER – CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT & CLIMATE CHANGE**

**LIST OF ACTIONS FROM THE ORDINARY MEETING  
13 September 2014**

The table below is intended to provide delegates with a summary of the meeting. Actions for delegates to complete prior to the next meeting have been highlighted in bold

Item	Action	By whom	Due By																								
	<b>Pre meeting Field Trip</b>  Write a letter of thanks to Randwick Council GM for David Ongkili and Lorraine Simpson facilitating the field trip	EO C/ CPO	9 Oct																								
5.0	<b>Business Arising</b>  • <b>SCCG Water Recycling Handbook for Councils</b>  Due to numerous other priorities the draft Handbook will now be tabled later in the year.  • <b>Establishment of workshop with Sydney Water, IPART and NSW EPA to end ocean outfalls</b>  The SCCG facilitate an "Integrated Water Management" forum be rescheduled for early 2015. This event will address WSUD, sewage outfalls, infrastructure issues including the SCCG integrated water project and the SCCG Water Recycling Guidelines (under development).  • <b>Seek meeting with the new NSW Environment Minister</b>  The EO will follow up the SCCG request for a delegation meeting with the Minister.	SCPO  Secretariat  EO	2014  Early 2015  8 Oct																								
6	<b>Annual Reports</b>  1) The Chairperson's and Executive Officer's Annual Reports be forward to Member Council General Managers for their information. 2) SCCG Delegates formally thank SCCG secretariat staff for their activities throughout 2013-2014.	EO  ALL	3 October  2014																								
7.5	Annual Elections – SCCG Executive Committee  <table><tr><td><b>Chairperson</b></td><td>Cr. Geoff Stevenson</td><td>Randwick</td></tr><tr><td><b>Vice Chairperson (Ocean council)</b></td><td>Cr. Cathy Griffin</td><td>Manly</td></tr><tr><td><b>Vice Chairperson (Estuarine Council)</b></td><td>Cr. Lynne Saville</td><td>Willoughby</td></tr><tr><td><b>Treasurer (Honorary)</b></td><td>Cr. Peter Towell</td><td>Sutherland</td></tr><tr><td><b>Secretary (Honorary)</b></td><td>Cr. Leon Goltzman</td><td>Waverley</td></tr><tr><td><b>Member</b></td><td>Cr. Irene Doutney</td><td>City of Sydney</td></tr><tr><td><b>Member</b></td><td>Cr. Selena Griffith</td><td>Pittwater</td></tr><tr><td><b>Member</b></td><td>Cr. Greg Levenston</td><td>Woollahra</td></tr></table>	<b>Chairperson</b>	Cr. Geoff Stevenson	Randwick	<b>Vice Chairperson (Ocean council)</b>	Cr. Cathy Griffin	Manly	<b>Vice Chairperson (Estuarine Council)</b>	Cr. Lynne Saville	Willoughby	<b>Treasurer (Honorary)</b>	Cr. Peter Towell	Sutherland	<b>Secretary (Honorary)</b>	Cr. Leon Goltzman	Waverley	<b>Member</b>	Cr. Irene Doutney	City of Sydney	<b>Member</b>	Cr. Selena Griffith	Pittwater	<b>Member</b>	Cr. Greg Levenston	Woollahra	Executive Committee	2014-2015
<b>Chairperson</b>	Cr. Geoff Stevenson	Randwick																									
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7.6	<b>Nominations for SCCG Honorary Members</b>  Honorary membership for 2014-2015 includes:  • E/Prof. Bruce Thom AM • Dr Judy Lambert AM • Mr Phil Colman • Mr George Cotis • Mr George Copeland • Ms Wendy McMurdo  1) The SCCG Honorary members nominations be endorsed. 2) The Secretariat write to nominees inviting them to consider becoming Honorary Members.	Honorary Members  CPO	2014-2015																								



Item	Action	By whom	Due By
9.2	<b>Consideration of SCCG representation for the Greater Sydney LLS Advisory Group(s)</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The report and attachments be received and considered.</li> <li>2) The SCCG nominated delegates to the Greater Sydney LLS Local Government Advisory Committee (LGAG) be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cr. Cathy Griffin - SCCG Vice Chairperson (Ocean)</li> <li>• Prof Bruce Thom AM - SCCG Honorary member</li> <li>• Alternative: Cr. Geoff Stevenson - SCCG Chairperson</li> </ul> </li> <li>3) The EO represent the SCCG on the Greater Sydney LLS Community Advisory Committee.</li> </ol>	Cr Griffin Prof Thom Cr Stevenson  EO	Ongoing (pending)  Ongoing
9.3	<b>Review / Re-Development of the SCCG Strategic Plan (2015-2019)</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The first draft SCCG Strategic Plan be forwarded to the Directional Committee and the Full Group for comment. The final draft then be sent formally to Member Councils for consultation. It is intended that the final draft (Member Council endorsed) Strategic Plan will be tabled at the December Full Group meeting for adoption.</li> </ol>	Secretariat	Oct - Dec
10.3	<b>Launch of the SCCG Emergency Management Planning - a Health Check for Local Government</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) SCCG delegates attend, and/or encourage senior managers to attend the Project Launch Forum addressing project outcomes on the 17 September 2014</li> <li>2) Dr Ian Armstrong be thanked for his substantial contributions to the SCCG.</li> </ol>	ALL  Ian Armstrong	17 Sept
10.5	<b>NSW Shark Meshing Program</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The SCCG write to DPI requesting a full report on the NSW Shark Meshing Program, including the science behind it and considerations and current research activities looking at alternatives risk management strategies to netting and culling.</li> <li>2) That DPI be asked to present this report at the December meeting of the SCCG.</li> </ol>	EO / CPO  EO	8 Oct  8 Oct
10.6	<b>Marine Estate Management Authority – Update Report</b> <p>The SCCG seek the MEMA to provide an update report for each SCCG meeting.</p>	EO	9 Oct
11.1	<b>Annual Financial Statement for the period 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014</b> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p><b>Resolved that:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The amended Annual Financial Statement for the period 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014 be received and noted.</li> <li>2) That Sydney Coastal Councils Group Inc make the following statement (subject to the satisfactory audit of the SCCG finances):</li> </ol> <p>In the opinion of the Members of the Sydney Coastal Councils Group Inc:</p> <p>(a) the accompanying general purpose financial report and special schedules of the Sydney Coastal Councils Group Inc for the period ending 30 June 2014 are drawn up so as to give a true and fair view of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) the state of affairs of the Group as at 30 June 2014, and the operating result</li> <li>(ii) and cash flows for the financial year ended on that date and all controlled entities; and</li> <li>(iii) the other matters required to be disclosed;</li> </ol> <p>(b) the general purpose financial report and special schedules are in accordance with the accounting and other records of the Group; and</p> <p>(c) the general purpose financial report is drawn up in accordance with accounting policy disclosed in the statement; and</p> <p>(d) no circumstances have arisen which would render the report false or misleading in any way.</p> </div>	SCCG	13 Sept

Item	Action	By whom	Due By
12	<p><b>General Business</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Cabinet in Confidence study on risk to life from flash flooding document</b> – access to document sought by Pittwater Council to assist it in undertaking a Risk to Life Assessment which will form a base document to its Risk to Life Policy.</li> </ul> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The SCCG support Pittwater Council's application to obtain the access the NSW government study on risk to life from flash flooding document</li> <li>2) The final wording of the letter be forwarded to the Executive Committee out of session for approval following further discussion with Pittwater Council.</li> </ol> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>10/50 Vegetation Clearing Code of Practice</b></li> </ul> <p>SCCG write to the Premier / Minister and relevant agencies recommending:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) A suspension of the 10/50 code until a review is undertaken</li> <li>2) Comprehensive mapping of the clearing entitlement areas in the LGA be made publicly available, including the criteria for defining such areas (with all mapping being ground truthed)</li> <li>3) A scientific review into the ecological impacts and actual bushfire hazard reduction benefits of these provisions, across urban and non-urban areas and/or local and regional scales</li> <li>4) A process under which local councils can seek to opt out of some of all of the provisions of the 10/50 Code</li> <li>5) A detailed public education process be undertaken to clarify what is and what is not permissible and associated consequences for illegal actions and other useful public compliance, management and further information details.</li> </ol>	<p><b>ALL</b></p> <p>Chair / EO Executive</p> <p>Chair / EO</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>17 Oct &lt; 17 Oct</p> <p>17 Oct</p>
12.4	<p><b>Next Meeting – Ordinary Meeting</b></p> <p><b>The next meeting of the Group be held on 6 December by the City of Sydney Council (at Town Hall) (pending confirmation).</b></p> <p>please mark in your diary !</p>	<b>ALL</b>	<b>6 Dec</b>



**SYDNEY COASTAL COUNCILS GROUP Inc.**  
**MINUTES FOR THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
**HELD ON SATURDAY 13 SEPTEMBER, 2014**  
**BY RANDWICK COUNCIL AT THE PRINCE HENRY CENTRE,**  
**LITTLE BAY**

**PRE MEETING TOUR**

**(11.30am-12.30pm)**

**“Little Bay (Prince Henry) Precinct -**

**History / Culture / Sustainable Development”**

*Randwick Council staff representatives David Ongkili and Lorraine Simpson hosted pre meeting field trip of the Little Bay (Prince Henry) Precinct. This provided delegates with review of the Aboriginal and European history of the area as well a review of sustainability and ecological aspects of the Little Bay Cove redevelopment.*

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Cr. Mark Castle	Botany Bay Council
Cr. Irene Doutney	City of Sydney Council
Cr. Candy Bingham	Manly Council
Cr. Hugh Burns	Manly Council
Mr. Peter Massey	North Sydney Council
Cr. Selena Griffith	Pittwater Council
Mr. Paul Hardie	Pittwater Council
Cr. Geoff Stevenson	Randwick Council
Cr. Lindsay Shurey	Randwick Council
Cr. Scott Nash(Mayor)	Randwick Council
Mr. David Dekel	Rockdale Council
Cr. Peter Towell	Sutherland Council
Cr. Sue Heins	Warringah Council
Cr. Sally Betts (Mayor)	Waverley Council
Cr. Leon Gottsman	Waverley Council
Cr. Lynne Saville	Willoughby Council
Cr. Greg Levenston	Woollahra Council
Emeritus Professor Bruce Thom AM	Honorary Member
Mr. George Cotis	Honorary Member
Dr. Judy Lambert AM	Honorary Member
Ms. Wendy McMurdo	Honorary Member
Mr. Geoff Withycombe	SCCG (EO)
Mr. Stephen Summerhayes	SCCG (MP&P)
Dr. Ian Armstrong	SCCG (PO-SP)
Ms. Emma Norrie	SCCG (CPO)

## 1. OPENING

The meeting opened at 1.30pm.

Cr Stevenson (SCCG Vice Chairperson) welcomed SCCG delegates and noted that Cr Griffin (SCCG Chairperson) was an apology for the AGM. Cr Stevenson introduced the Mayor of Randwick, Cr Scott Nash to welcome delegates to Randwick.

Mayor Nash acknowledged the traditional owners and welcomed the SCCG to Randwick Council's Prince Henry Centre. Mayor Nash noted his attendance at the recent SCCG 25 year celebrations and congratulated the Group on this great event and acknowledged the substantial work of the SCCG over the last 25 years.

## 2. APOLOGIES

Cr. Brian Troy	Botany Bay Council
Cr. John Mant	City of Sydney Council
Cr. Linda Scott	City of Sydney Council
Cr. Cathy Griffin	Manly Council
Cr. Barbara Aird	Manly Council
Cr. Tony Carr	North Sydney Council
Cr. Shane O'Brian (Mayor)	Rockdale Council
Cr. Vanessa Moskal	Warringah Council
Cr. Wendy Norton	Willoughby Council
Cr. Matthew Robertson	Woollahra Council
Mr. Phil Colman	Honorary Member

**Resolved that** the apologies be received and noted.

**Councils not represented at the meeting**  
Hornsby, Leichhardt and Mosman.

## 3. DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS

**Resolved that** the there was no declaration of pecuniary interests.

## 4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

### 4.1 Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the SCCG held on 14 June 2014 at the City of Sydney.

**Resolved that** the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the SCCG held on 14 June 2014 at the City of Sydney Council be confirmed.

### 4.2 Minutes of the Executive Committee of the SCCG held on 14 June 2014 at the City of Sydney.

**Resolved that** the Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting of the SCCG held on 14 June 2014 hosted by the City of Sydney be received and noted.

### 4.3 Minutes of the Technical Committee Meeting of the SCCG held on 7 August 2014 hosted by Sydney Water at their Monitoring Services Laboratory, West Ryde.

**Resolved that** the Minutes of the Technical Committee Meeting of the SCCG held on 7 August 2014 hosted by Sydney Water at their Monitoring Services laboratory, West Ryde be received and noted.

## 5. BUSINESS ARISING

Business arising from Minutes other than those items listed below in Reports. Delegates were referred the action list contained within the meeting notice memo.

- **Establishment of workshop with Sydney Water, IPART and NSW EPA to end ocean outfalls**

*The SCCG facilitate an "Integrated Water Management" forum in the second half of 2014. This event will address WSUD, sewage outfalls, infrastructure issues including the SCCG integrated water project and the SCCG Water Recycling Guidelines (under development).*

This activity is outstanding due to lack of resources and is now likely to be scheduled for early 2015.

- **Seek meeting with the new NSW Environment Minister**

*The SCCG seek a meeting with the new Environment Minister, the Hon Rob Stokes MP (delegation to include the Executive Officer, Cr Griffin, Cr Betts, Cr Levenston, Cr Stevenson and Cr Towell).*

The EO noted that the Minister was the guest speaker at the recent SCCG 25 Year Gala Evening, however no response to the request for the delegation had been received as yet. The EO will follow this up.

**Resolved that:**

- 1) **Establishment of workshop with Sydney Water, IPART and NSW EPA to end ocean outfalls** be re-scheduled for early 2015.
- 2) **Seek meeting with the new NSW Environment Minister** - The EO will follow up the SCCG request for a delegation meeting with the Minister.

## 6. ANNUAL REPORTS

### 6.1 Chairperson's Annual Report

(ATTACHED)

Cr Griffin's Annual report was not available at the meeting. It was resolved that the Annual report be included with the Minutes.

**Resolved that the Chairperson's Annual Report be included in the minutes of the AGM.**

### 6.2 Executive Officer's Annual Report

(ATTACHED)

The report was tabled at the meeting. The EO provided delegates with a presentation providing a summary of the year's activities and achievements. This included a review of:

- Key Areas of Focus
- The Year in Review – 'Facts and Figures'
- SCCG Internal Activities
- Key SCCG Program Outcomes
- Financial Position
- Conclusions and Thanks

The MPP, Stephen Summerhayes, then provided a review of the meetings and activities of the SCCG Technical Committee (this presentation is also attached to the minutes).

Delegates formally thanked SCCG secretariat staff for their activities throughout 2013-2014.



**Resolved that:**

- 1) The Executive Officer's (public officer) Annual Report be received, considered and adopted as part of the 2013/2014 Annual Report.
- 2) The Chairperson's and Executive Officer's Annual Reports be forward to Member Council General Managers for their information.
- 3) SCCG Delegates formally thank SCCG secretariat staff for their activities throughout 2013-2014.

## 7. ANNUAL ELECTIONS

### Proceedings in Brief

Cr. Stevenson advised that Cr. Cathy Griffin will not be contesting the seat of Chairperson.

Cr. Stevenson introduced the procedures for the Annual Executive Committee elections. The Executive Committee consists of the Chairperson, two Vice Chairpersons, Treasurer and Secretary and up to three other committee members who are delegates of financial Member Councils.

As per tradition, Cr. Stevenson handed over the Chair to Professor Bruce Thom as returning officer for the purposes of the election of Chairperson.

### 7.1 Chairperson

Cr. Geoff Stevenson (Randwick Council) was nominated and elected Chairperson.

### 7.2 Vice Chairpersons

#### (i) *Vice Chairperson (ocean council)*

Cr. Cathy Griffin (Manly Council) was nominated and elected Vice Chairperson (Ocean Council).

#### (ii) *Vice Chairperson (estuarine council)*

Cr. Lynne Saville (Willoughby Council) was nominated and elected Vice Chairperson (Estuarine Council).

### 7.3 Treasurer (Honorary)

Cr. Peter Towell (Sutherland Council) was nominated and elected Treasurer.

### 7.4 Secretary (Honorary)

Cr. Leon Goltsman (Waverley Council) was nominated and elected Secretary.

### 7.5 Executive Members

The following delegates were nominated and elected

- |                        |                        |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| 1) Cr. Irene Doutney   | City of Sydney Council |
| 2) Cr. Selina Griffith | Pittwater Council      |
| 3) Cr. Greg Levenston  | Woollahra Council      |

The 2014 - 2015 Sydney Coastal Councils Group Inc. Executive Committee consists of:

<b>Chairperson</b>	Cr. Geoff Stevenson	Randwick
<b>Vice Chairperson (Ocean council)</b>	Cr. Cathy Griffin	Manly
<b>Vice Chairperson (Estuarine Council)</b>	Cr. Lynne Saville	Willoughby
<b>Treasurer (Honorary)</b>	Cr. Peter Towell	Sutherland

<b>Secretary (Honorary)</b>	Cr. Leon Goltsman	Waverley
<b>Member</b>	Cr. Irene Doutney	City of Sydney
<b>Member</b>	Cr. Selena Griffith	Pittwater
<b>Member</b>	Cr. Greg Levenston	Woollahra

## 7.6 Nominations for SCCG Honorary Members

Nominations for honorary membership for 2014-2015 to include but not limited to:

- E/Prof. Bruce Thom AM
- Dr Judy Lambert AM
- Mr Phil Colman
- Mr George Cotis
- Mr George Copeland
- Ms Wendy McMurdo

### Resolved that:

- 1) The SCCG Honorary members nominations be endorsed.
- 2) The Secretariat write to nominees inviting them to consider becoming Honorary Members.

## 7.7 Nominations for External Committees (if required)

Nominations for the Boating Advisory Committee were deferred to the December meeting, following Cr. Griffin's report on Committee activities.

**Resolved that** External Committee representation(s) be deferred to the December meeting, following Cr. Griffin's report on Committee activities.

## 8. CORRESPONDENCE

### 8.1 Sent and Received Correspondence

**Resolved that** the circulated "sent" and "received" correspondence be received and noted.

## 9. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

### 9.1 SCCG 25 Year Anniversary "Caring for the Coast"

#### Proceedings in Brief

The CPO provided an overview of the aims and outcomes from the Conference and Gala Evening held on 29 August 2014.

The core aims of the events were to:

- acknowledge the multiple values of Sydney's coast and promote their protection
- review the role of the SCCG in coastal management in Sydney over the last 25 years
- unite Member Councils and key partners of the Group
- scope future directions for coastal management.

The Conference was attended by 84 participants representing 45 different organisations. Highlights included a session on Valuing Sydney's Coast featuring students from Pittwater High School and Emeritus Professor Bruce Thom AM, presentations from Sydney Water and the Department of Planning and Environment, a panel session from former and current members of the Group and a presentation and workshop on looking forward 25 years, facilitated by ecologist and futurist, Dr Steven Cork.

The Gala Evening was attended by 90 participants representing 52 different organisations. Highlights included a presentation from the NSW Environment Minister, the Hon Rob Stokes MP, historian and author Dr Ian Hoskins and founding SCCG Chairperson, Ms Barbara Armitage OAM.

The SCCG would like to thank our sponsors for the events, Sydney Water and the Department of Planning and Environment.

The EO again noted the extraordinary efforts of the SCCG CPO Emma Norrie in organising these substantial events on behalf of the Group. Delegates congratulated Emma and the Team on running such professional events.

<b>Resolved that the report be received and considered.</b>
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## **9.2 Consideration of SCCG representation for the Greater Sydney LLS Advisory Group(s)**

### Proceedings in Brief

The LLS has written to the SCCG seeking consideration of SCCG nomination for representation on the Greater Sydney Local Land Services - Local Government Advisory Group (LGAG).

Cr. Stevenson nominated Cr. Griffin as the SCCG representative for the Advisory Group.

The EO noted some confusion regarding Council representation on the Group. Delegates reiterated this confusion and questioned the focus and relevance of LLS to the SCCG (and the Sydney metropolitan region), given the shift in focus towards agricultural management.

Cr. Betts suggested a second representative be nominated, given the size of the SCCG. Cr. Betts nominated Prof Thom as the second representative for the SCCG.

SCCG Representatives to the LLS Local Government Advisory Group are:

1. Cr. Cathy Griffin - SCCG Vice Chairperson (Ocean)
2. Prof Bruce Thom AM - SCCG Honorary member

Alternative: Cr. Geoff Stevenson - SCCG Chairperson

The Advisory Group is meeting on 17 September 2014.

Other discussion notes:

- Cr. Betts noted confusion regarding the lack of nomination of SSROC.
- Prof Thom queried the role of the GS LLS and sought clarification from delegates.
- Dr Lambert noted the significant downsizing of resources and focus on the NRM role (in comparison to the former CMAs). Dr Lambert also noted that the other LLS areas had prohibitive requirements for the Chairs relating to ownership of rural property.
- Cr. Saville noted the importance of conserving agricultural land in the Sydney basin, particularly given that the Metropolitan Strategy does not include agricultural land.

It was noted that Cr. Griffin, Prof Thom and Cr. Stevenson were unable to attend the first meeting of the LGAG. Cr. Saville was nominated to attend in the place of Cr. Griffin. It was further resolved that the nominated SCCG representatives and Cr. Saville report back to the SCCG December meeting on outcomes of this first meeting.

The EO further noted that he had been invited to sit on the GS LLS Community Advisory Committee, which he had accepted.



**Resolved that:**

- 1) The report and attachments be received and considered.
- 2) The SCCG nominated delegates to the Greater Sydney LLS Local Government Advisory Committee (LGAG) be:
  - Cr. Cathy Griffin - SCCG Vice Chairperson (Ocean)
  - Prof Bruce Thom AM - SCCG Honorary member
  - Alternative: Cr. Geoff Stevenson - SCCG Chairperson
- 3) The EO represent the SCCG on the Greater Sydney LLS Community Advisory Committee.

**9.3 Review / Re-Development of the SCCG Strategic Plan (2015-2019)**Proceedings in Brief

Dr. Lambert provided an overview of the Strategic Plan review process.

The EO informed delegates that the draft strategic plan 2015-2019 is not in a form that can be considered as a complete entity at the meeting. The EO updated delegates on further refinements by the Secretariat based on Directional Committee and TC feedback, including the Group's proposed Vision, Mission, Aim(s) and Objectives.

The following discussion ensued:

- Cr. Heins suggested addition of 'waterways' to the Vision to capture the estuarine areas represented by the Group. In response, the MPP clarified that 'coastal areas' would be clearly defined in the document as including estuarine areas.
- Mr Cotis asked why 'catchment' had not been included. In response, Dr Lambert noted the already stretched resources of the Group and the need to contain the workload to things that are very clearly coastal management issues.
- Cr. Levenston suggested the Vision be changed to 'Our coastal areas are understood and valued' to reduce the duplication between Vision and Mission.
- Cr. Griffith suggested the Vision be amended to be in active tense. In response, the EO suggested this may be more appropriate for the Mission, with the Vision resembling more a collective statement about a desired future condition.
- Prof Thom questioned the Vision (valued by whom?), noting that it creates ambiguity and that coasts are often vulnerable to vested interests.
- Cr. Saville suggested specifying 'natural values' in the Vision. In response, the EO suggested that if one aspect of the quadruple bottom line is identified (i.e. environmental values), all others should be (i.e. economic and social values).
- Cr. Saville noted the absence of any references to NRM.
- Cr. Bingham noted that the Vision is uninspiring and does not convey the focus or purpose of the Group.
- Cr. Goltsman suggested further deliberation of the Group's focus may elucidate a clearer Vision. He noted that the Vision should be like a 'tag line'.
- Cr. Hugh Burns suggested the Full Group is too large a forum to deliberate this.

The overall opinion was that the Committee process may have potentially summarised the Vision and Mission of the Group too much.

The EO noted that, following the meeting, the Secretariat will finalise the draft Strategic Plan for the review of the Directional Committee and Full Group. Once this draft is finalised it will be sent formally to Member Councils for consultation. It is intended that the final draft (Member Council endorsed) Strategic Plan will be tabled at the December Full Group meeting for adoption.