

OPEN FOR BUSINESS: FINAL APPROVALS FOR OME FUEL LICENCE - NOW GRANTED

The new owners of OME, the Bulovic Family have finally been granted full fuel licence approvals. A lengthy affair with a variety of regulation changes being implemented in recent years, but the OME is officially open for business with diesel already flowing at the pumps and other fuels imminent.

Inspired into existence by the forward thinking of a dedicated group of opal miners in the 1980's the Opal Miner's Enterprise (OME) has found its resting place in the hands of long term Opal Mining family at Coober Pedy, the Bulovic Family.

Coober Pedy was the first opal field to be discovered in South Australia in 1915 and indeed a unique feature in South Australia's history with OPAL being adopted as South Australia's gemstone emblem on 15 August 1985 and then proclaimed Australia's National Gemstone in 1993.

Opal Mining became the saviour for many European migrants during the depression and for soldiers returning from the 2nd World War, then again after the Snowy Mountain Scheme concluded. To have an historic town positioned on top the world largest opal deposits is surely a jewel in the crown of South Australia.

The recent sale of OME took place towards the end of 2023, although it had taken place in the minds of the two Bulovic sons when the community-operated OME reached a point in its history of having to close its doors.

Roger Bulovic explains. "At that time we seriously wanted to continue the community built legacy of OME, but it wasn't to be, and Greg Searle purchased the business from the Association and operated it for around 5 years. After that Greg engaged in several lease arrangements which kept it going until more recently when our family bought the business from Greg. We are very grateful to Greg for that opportunity."

The Opal Miner's Enterprise has been a prime example of what a community with common goals can achieve, even in the desert. The OME was created by selfless volunteers in the 80's dedicated to easing the burden on opal miners at various stages of their 'luck'. We cherish that community spirit, and even though times change, the work and example of those earlier role models has not been wasted.

"My brother Dean and I were born into Opal Mining. Our father Rade Bulovic mined opal at Andamooka from 60s through to then 70s before coming to Coober Pedy.

"No matter how far we travel from Coober Pedy we are like homing pigeons, we always return. We get homesick for the opal fields. Our father Rade was an early opal miner here. Our mother Julie still works with us out on the field. Having a supportive family is another bonus. So you could say we are also investing in our own children's and grandchildren's future."

As we matured my brother Dean and I developed aspirations to invest in a suitable business at Coober Pedy. While we felt attracted to the jewellery world of design and retail, we kept an open mind, and now here we are doing what opal miners do and that is living and building our dreams and helping other Opal Industry die-hards.

INSIDE: Minister for Local Government hears Coober Pedy Ratepayer concerns

Q: Does the model of local Government used at Coober Pedy, NEED REVISING/SIMPLIFYING?



Above: The youngest Bulovic boys showing their approval of the OME aquisition.

Cousins Novak, Nebojsa and Stefan Bulovic

Opal Miner George Likouresis filling up at the OME this week, and catching up with "Bomb King" Yanni Aslamatzis

Behind the scenes the Bulovics have been upgrading the OME Tyre Centre with equipment capable of changing heavy earthmoving machinery tyres. Call in and meet their new Tyre Centre Manager Oliver Grievson

Gas for local households will continue, as will the extensive range of batteries, oils and everyday items to cater for the opal miner's needs.

"Don't forget that we are opal miners and are delighted to have steady fuel prices and those much needed replacement parts for our machines," said Roger.

Local readers stay tuned. In coming editions we will be highlighting the evolution of OME from early days and its need to adapt with the changing circumstances of the times. We welcome any input or memories.



The Ballot at Shell Patch. L-R Donna and Ed Punchard (WA); long term mining family Roger Bulovic, (two others) Dean Bulovic, Rade Bulovic and Monique Harding

SERVING THE OPAL CAPITAL OF THE WORLD SINCE 1982

ABOUT US

The annual rainfall in the area is around 162 mm | 6.4 inch per year.

The CPRT newspaper first became DIGITAL/ONLINE in 2006 as well as hardcopy. Although online is now the main trend, hard copies are still printed locally.

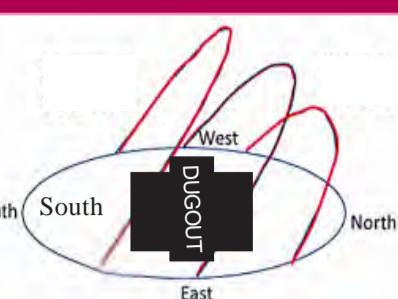
Editor - Margaret Mackay
PO Box 10 Coober Pedy SA 5723
Ph: (08) 8672 5920
Email: editor@cooberpedytimes.com
<https://cooberpedytimes.com/>

Advertising Rates

Display \$6.75 per cm/col
Classified \$8.35 per cm/col

7 DAYS WEATHER at COOBER PEDY Oodnadatta Tarcoola Andamooka Roxby Downs

	SUN Aug 11	MON Aug 12	TUE Aug 13	WED Aug 14	THU Aug 15	FRI Aug 16	SAT Aug 17
Summary							
Maximum	23°C	26°C	27°C	29°C	31°C	24°C	26°C
Minimum	8°C	9°C	11°C	12°C	14°C	11°C	9°C
Chance of Rain Likely Amount	5% <1mm	5% <1mm	5% <1mm	10% <1mm	30% <1mm	5% <1mm	5% <1mm
UV Index	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	High
Frost Risk	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
	9am	3pm	9am	3pm	9am	3pm	9am
Wind Speed	15km/h E	18km/h ENE	15km/h ENE	23km/h NNE	19km/h NNE	19km/h N	14km/h NNE
	3pm	3pm	3pm	27km/h NNE	33km/h NNW	17km/h WSW	29km/h SSW
	9am	3pm	9am	3pm	9am	3pm	9am
							19km/h WNW



Spring Equinox. 0° of Libra - 22 September 2024. AWST 8.43pm. ACST 10.13pm.

Summer Solstice. 0° of Capricorn - 21 December 2024. AWST 5.20pm.

MAILING LIST

Send an email to be included on emailing list

MARGARET MACKAY News Reporter, Resident and Coober Pedy Ratepayer has been the Editor of CPRT since 2005 and a volunteer contributor since the mid 1990s, covering general news stories, photography, advertising and the coordinating of community contributions.



Margaret Mackay
Editor

LEILA DAY was raised in Balranald NSW and has lived in Andamooka for 15 years. She is the Chair (AOFTA) Andamooka Opal Fields Tourism Assoc. Inc. Owner/Operator Andamooka Observatory (and more) Leila joins our team as we share highlights of our respective OPAL FIELDS.



Leila Day
Andamooka

JOHN DI DONNA was raised in the South Australian Outback and is a long term resident of Coober Pedy. As a business person John is a regular, commuter along the Far North and Flinders highways and byways, covering the entire Far North & East and Outback.



John Di Donna
Opinion & Commentary

Bi Monthly

GEORGE KOUNTOURIS is a 2nd Generation Opal Miner/Retailer and President of Coober Pedy Retail, Business & Tourism Association. George will provide regular updates for business and tourism in our area



Pres. CRBT
Opal Miner/Trader

The Opal Capital of the World

An Underground Town built on the back of OPAL MINING.
OPAL = AUSTRALIA'S NATIONAL GEM

*Over 40 Nationalities living together;
bonded by the OPAL Industry

*Coober Pedy - situated on the LARGEST OPAL FORMATION in the world

*Spacious underground living
*Beautiful Opal Gemstones

Action!

The tipper 'tripper' is working a treat!
Now just to find that pesky million!" says opal miner Lachlan Blatchford



World Class Opal

DISCLAIMER: Opinions and letters published in The Coober Pedy Regional Times are not necessarily the views of the Editor, or Publisher. The Coober Pedy Regional Times reserves the right to edit or omit copy, in accordance with newspaper policies. Letters to the Editor must be attributed with a name, address and contact phone number - names and town of origin will be printed, or may be withheld at the Editor's discretion. Material is published with the agreement that the contributor takes full responsibility for their submission. During the course of any election campaign, letters to the editor dealing with election issues must contain the author's name and street address (not PO Box) for publication. Right of reply is always available.

Copyright Notice: All of the content published by CPRT, including articles, photos, images, graphics, advertising, layout, printing plate content and related material, is owned by CPRT, or by other information providers who have licensed their content for use in this publication. Additionally, the entire content of the Coober Pedy Regional Times past and present is copyrighted as a collective work under Australian copyright laws and may not be reproduced without written authorisation. The owner of the collective work is Margaret Mackay

INDEMNITY: Advertising agencies, advertisers and other contributors accept full responsibility for the contents of advertisements and other submitted, signed material and agree to indemnify the publishers against any claim or proceedings out of the publication of such advertisements or material. Provision of material or copy for publication in the Coober Pedy Regional Times Newspaper constitutes acceptance by advertisers, advertising agencies and other contributors of this condition.

The COOBER PEDY REGIONAL TIMES is 'WORLD WIDE'

READ Newspaper FREE online at: <https://cooberpedytimes.com/>

Friday 9 August 2024

IT'S TIME TO ENTER INTO A DISPUTE WITH THE COUNCIL AND REFUSE TO PAY RATES UNTIL OUR AUTONOMY IS RESTORED

Hon. Joe Szakacs MP (Minister for Local Government) along with Ms Alex Hart from the Office of Local Government, and attended a Town Forum MC's by the council Administrator Geoff Sheridan. This was on Wednesday, 31 July, at the Italian Club with approximately 70 business, residential ratepayers and a few dozen others.

They came, listened, and IGNORED the 70 odd ratepayers who conveyed their intense concerns, six years under administrators, where rates soared with over a 30 per cent increase within two years, accompanied by heavily reduced services and continued with administrative mistakes and senseless spending.

Lack of community consultation: How can sound decisions be made when administrators can't be bothered communicating with the local community therefore alienating themselves from important local knowledge. There are various ways of conducting community consultation without the need to develop a token group of non representatives with a paid leader (more waste, divisions and fantasy).

Joe Szakacs MP was replaying a script we have been hearing for six years under administration: "We need to move forward." Politicians and Legislators need to grasp how maladministration or misconduct occurs, in order to plug the necessary holes. Then we can move forward. Six years later, the only thing that has moved forward at Coober Pedy is the size of the debt, and the size of the remuneration packages. If you combine this with the lack of an ILUA, then you have a town with frozen developments going nowhere!

The repeated cycles of inaction, reaction, incompetence, and pointless spending is causing frustration and a strong demand for an immediate reassessment of the model of government or representation in effect at Coober Pedy.



Ratepayer Edi Brandli points out how a town full of business people and eager workers are being hamstrung by outdated bureaucracy.



Local business owner John Di Donna

- The Council wages increased to 5.5 million dollars. Increasing potholes all over the township
- Lack of road maintenance
- Lack of gardening maintenance
- Rubbish, litter, broken glass and more being left behind by visitors to the town
- Garbage trucks breaking down
- The township resembles a third-world country.
- Burnt-out buildings left standing for years, camp dogs roaming the town, dog attacks, rubbish all over the township, water leaks,
- Public toilets inoperative
- Potential misuse of ratepayer's credit cards
- Accounting errors
- Lack of transparency
- Lack of Consultation, or conducts selective consultation
- Lack of leadership
- Lack of oversight
- Invoices either not paid on time or not paid at all.
- Five CEOs in 5 years: Screenings for suitable CEOs do not result in a long term positions.
- Ratepayers cannot afford to continue with this extravagant management model. Time for a review of small town management perhaps?
- Either the Local Government Act or its applications are inadequate.

Others could no doubt add to this list.

BHP upgraded the old basketball courts without community consultation, and we are now burdened with more debt for the next twenty years' via a maintenance program, thirty-five thousand dollars per year, which was not budgeted—so another rate increase.

The Administrator's rate increase will generate almost \$20 million in revenue minus \$5.5 million in wages. With \$14.5 million remaining, how much will be used for services in Coober Pedy and how much will be used towards the debt? It's a simple question without answers.

The administrators travel home to Adelaide at affordable rates, leaving the struggling pensioners and low-income earners to find the money for their massive rate increases.

Governments are giving too much discretion to spend the communities money on advice that is not taken, or is not working. If all the advice from professional services was of any value then we would be financially sustainable already, right?

At the meeting, Joe Szakacs MP stated that the Council debt is not with the government; therefore, there will be no state bail-out.

WHY did the state government appoint what we perceive to be incompetent administrators for six years? The state government is at fault for all the failings. We tried many times to tell them, but they preferred to back their appointee's excuses, and let the taxpayer's/ratepayers continue to be disrespected and disadvantaged.

The people who live and work in remote areas are every bit a part of the State of South Australia as those who live in the more popular voting areas, and should be treated as favourably.

Five years into administration, the government requests an asset audit. REALLY!! Why wasn't a comprehensive audit done at the commencement of administration?

Why is this government just finding out the council has not paid payroll tax for the last eight years?

Why are we paying bungling accountants?

Why are we paying over \$300,000.00 in wages plus expenses for three Administrators with no positive or progressive results?

Enough is enough. It's time to enter a dispute with the council and refuse to pay rates until we receive our autonomy.



WAS IT A FLOP?

Minister for Local Government Joe Szakacs convened a meeting along with the State government appointed Administrators Sheridan, Moyle and Vickery along with Alex Hart Office for Local Government at the Italian Club in Coober Pedy 31st July 2024 to take questions and inform the community on the direction our town is to go in.

To say that community questions fell on deaf ears would be an understatement. Geoff Sheridan seemed to be quite proud of himself that He, Moyle and Vickery had turned around Coober Pedy's financial woes and was unconditionally supported by Minister Joe Szakacs.

They failed to mention the fact that previous administrator Tim Jackson had not paid any DCCP invoices and had been using money to pay EDL as an overdraught where he was paying his own wages.

They rationalised the Rate rise that had been implemented that put rate charges in Coober Pedy on par with multi-Million dollar Adelaide properties. A ridiculous situation when one considers the meagre property values in Coober Pedy. We have a very small ratepayer base made up mostly of pensioners and lower socio economic groups that simply cannot afford the charges introduced by these Administrators. Those concerns have been raised since administration was implemented.

Des Roffey raised issues about previous alleged maladministration where he was told by Minister Szakacs that we are only moving forward not looking back. So in essence everyone gets away with what they have done. Other Community members supported Roffey with their own knowledge of previous accounts of alleged maladministration.

George Kountouris President CPRBTA asked Sheridan if he thought he was the man for the job implying that he (Kountouris) did not.. Something that most at the meeting agreed with.

Long time Coober Pedy resident George Likouresis addressed the meeting explaining how his rates on a dugout in town was now \$3000.p.a; far more than his sisters rates who owns a \$1.5 million property in Adelaide.

There were times when Minister Szakacs seemed totally confused with what was going on at the meeting. One example was when George Naumovic was explaining that the current Administrators were bankrupting him after the State of South Australia conceded that he is a Whistleblower.

Szakacs replied that there was nothing before the courts, where he was corrected and again it had to be explained that the Administrators had Naumovic in the Federal bankruptcy court, but he still seemed confused.

Another example was when an elderly gentleman whose name I do not know raised the issue of more policing in Coober Pedy, how overworked the current officers are and they need to pay them more. He then went on to use the analogy "if you pay peanuts you'll only get monkeys" where Minister Szakacs appeared to get angry and retorted "I can assure you there are no monkeys on the South Australian Police force".

The consensus from community members after the meeting was that nothing had been achieved, at least on the face of it. No politicians and especially bureaucrats had not and probably never will listen to community suggestions and concerns.

There was an uncomfortable feeling present of being viewed as second rate citizens without a brain and who needed to be looked after by some Government bureaucrat.

Trimming down council workforce fell on deaf ears. Something the community has lobbied for, for years.

On the night there was a total focus on money and how to get more out of a community that cannot afford it.

I have been Labor my whole life but now am questioning that loyalty. Margaret Thatcher once said "watch out for socialist when they run out of money, because they will come after yours." Something that seems to have been in full flight in the meeting at the Italian Club and since the appointment of Administrators.

Ratepayer, Name supplied

MISLEADING STATEMENT BY ADMINISTRATOR AT PUBLIC MEETING

At a Council meeting RE. Public Consultation - Verbal Submissions 2023/24 Annual Business Plan, Budget + Long Term Financial Plan - 12 July 2023 at 47 minutes former DCCP Councillor Des Roffey raised to the current administrators that Former CEO Dean Miller informed at an earlier meeting that DCCP had spent \$600 thousand Dollars prosecuting former DCCP Councilor George Naumovic.

In the Same meeting 12th July 2023 at 43 minutes 10 seconds to 44 minutes 10 seconds Mr. Roffey repeatedly asked Jackson/ Miller be reported to ICAC after Administrator Sheridan Identifies maladministration by Previous Administrator Tim Jackson and Ceo Dean Miller he laughs and says "he does not have the power to do that".

That statement is misleading. Below is an extract of a FOI filed by Mr Roffey where he wants to know what was spent on legal fees by DCCP under Jackson and Miller. From 24 January 2020 to 3 June 2020.

Sincerely, AJ Walsh (Ratepayer)

<https://www.cooberpedy.sa.gov.au/council/meetings/meetings-recordings/meeting-recordings/public-consultation-verbal-submissions-202324-annual-business-plan,-budget-long-term-financial-plan-12-july-2023>

CONSULTANT FEES						[REPRINTED FROM CPRT: Friday 10 September 2021]
24 January 2020 to 3 June 2020						
WITH TRAVEL TO COOBER PEDY						
AC Drive Systems	\$4,526	ACCOM.	TRAVEL	OTHER	\$6,852	Water leak investigation
Adelaide EWP					\$4,345	EWP compliance inspection
Bentleys					\$45,086	Audit work
Emu Link - Tim Haynes	\$7,896		\$636		\$8,532	Professional advice
Governor General Cosgrove			\$646		\$646	Visit to Coober Pedy
Professional Building Services - G. Riches				\$99,014	\$99,014	Consultation regarding planning
Hugh Davis		\$130			\$130	
Precise Health & Building Services L DeVeth	\$62,292	\$7,953	\$1,370	\$509	\$72,124	Environmental health consultancy & inspections
Michael O'Connell			\$402		\$402	
Michele Bennetts	\$18,249				\$18,249	Financial year statements, Rates review, Financial advice and consulting fees
Moira M T Were	\$3,300		\$764		\$4,064	Assist Council in development of a community plan for Coober Pedy
Outback Communications			\$856		\$856	
Priority Plumbing	\$1,624				\$1,624	Leak investigation works
Rawson - Alan Treloar	\$8,829		\$646		\$9,475	On site assistance - Issues relating to PLC's, Ethernet Network, Modbus and SCADA
Tonkin	\$115,503			\$18,141	\$133,644	Coober Pedy flood damage + professional service with claim
Skilmar - David Hope	\$114,037	\$1,449			\$115,486	Financial and Strategic Financial Management consultancy
Subnet				\$10,038	\$10,038	Prepare scope of work for tender submission for IT infrastructure refresh program as per audit report recommendations
Utintja Consulting (Alan Rushbrook)	\$144,926	\$1,500	\$3,275	\$3,750	\$153,451	Consulting services
Vintek	\$9,680				\$9,680	IT maintenance
WITHOUT TRAVEL TO COOBER PEDY						
Business Energy Insight	\$10,296				\$10,296	Analysis and reporting on the impact of the proposed introduction of demand charges
Credit Solutions	\$29,896				\$29,896	Solicitors fees
Gayler Professional Engineering	\$4,792				\$4,792	Engineering advice
Innovision Enterprises	\$2,200				\$2,200	Audit Committee attendance
InSyncHR	\$7,951				\$7,951	Code of conduct investigation
John Comrie	\$2,640				\$2,640	Support to Council in preparing for and attending court
Kath Mitchell	\$3,050				\$3,050	Audit Committee attendance
Kemps	\$20,947				\$20,947	Solicitors fees
Kenneth Daniel	\$8,000				\$8,000	Draft paper on regional governance
LGA	\$28,013				\$28,013	Recruitment services provided - Independent chair and member of the CEO Oversight Committee - Membership - Web hosting
Ludwig Kraayenbrink	\$3,234				\$3,234	Review & tender documents, development MOU, review Vintek service schedule managed service and master agreement
Minter Ellison	\$1,683				\$1,683	Legal advice - Underpayment of wages claim
Morton Phillips	\$28,657				\$28,657	Placement fee CEO + travel expenses for candidates and advertising
Norman Waterhouse	\$496,330				\$496,330	Legal consultation - \$336,616 George Naumovic
Neville Hall	\$2,900				\$2,900	Audit Committee
The Working Journey Company	\$19,227				\$19,227	Selection of the CEO - Interviews and Leadership Maturity Framework
Richard Younger	\$1,600				\$1,600	Audit Committee
Seed Consulting	\$639				\$639	
GRAND TOTAL	\$1,162,917	\$11,888	\$7,739	\$183,209	\$1,365,753	

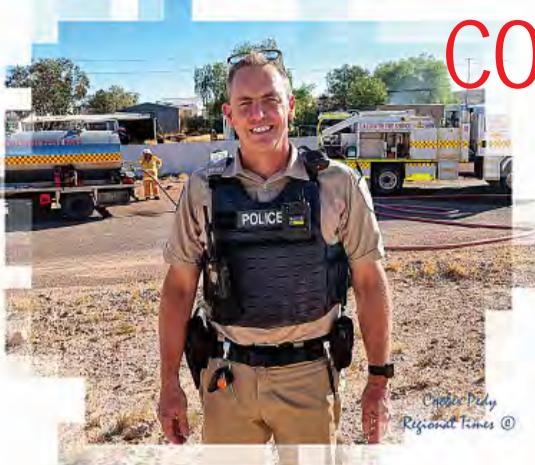
2020 FOI REQUEST REVEALS -
Council spent over \$1M on
Consultant fees in 6 months, PLUS
the staggering amount of
ratepayer funds being spent to
suppress a Whistleblower

Community Questions for Administrator

Q: What is the current cumulative expenditure re: Whistleblower?

Q: Please explain the relevance of this extraneous 'Whistleblower' expense, and how it adds value to this community?

Q: Are you not considered a public officer under the ICAC Act?



Acting Sgt Scott Simpson - Coober Pedy

4/7/2024 – Hutchison St - Serious Criminal Trespass & Theft

Unknown person has broken into the victim's shed and stole about \$20.00 of cheap Opal causing \$100 damage.

4/7/2024 – Hutchison St - Theft

Suspect stole alcohol valued at \$110.

8/7/2024 – Hutchison St – Theft

Suspect stole alcohol and who was located and arrested.

Anti-corruption chiefs announce fundamental principles



31/07/2024 at the Australian Public Sector Anti-Corruption Conference in Darwin, commissioners of the 10 independent anti-corruption and integrity agencies around Australia announced the Fundamental Principles of Australian Anti-Corruption Commissions.

The 12 principles provide a framework for legislation and policy governing anti-corruption and integrity commissions.

Each principle is considered fundamental to the ability of an anti-corruption or integrity commission to undertake its functions independently and effectively.

The 12 fundamental principles state that commissions must have:

- the ability to receive and consider referrals from anyone
- the ability to commence an investigation on the commission's own motion
- a mandatory reporting obligation for the heads of public sector agencies to report suspected corruption
- protections for whistleblowers and witnesses
- coercive powers to obtain information and evidence
- the ability to refer matters to a prosecuting authority
- the ability to make recommendations
- the ability to report on investigations and make public statements
- a corruption prevention and education function
- a sufficient and predictable budget
- transparency of appointments
- effective and proportionate oversight

See next page - FOR EXPANDED PRINCIPALS - to help keep our state corruption free at ALL levels

COOBER PEDY CRIME REPORT

04/07/2024 – 07/08/2024

13/7/2024 – Kent St – Property Damage

Unknown person threw rocks through rear window of parked unattended vehicle. Approx \$500 damage.

16/7/2024 – Hutchison St – Property Damage

Unknown offender smashed the lower glass panel of the front door of premises. Estimated damage \$500.

20/7/2024 – Hyatt Rd – Theft of Motor Vehicle

Unknown offender/s stole 2008 Holden sedan parked in driveway which has since been recovered.

22/7/2024 – Alp St – Serious Criminal Trespass

Unknown offender/s attempted to gain entry to vacant premises by smashing front window with unknown object causing approx. \$3000 damage.

23/7/2024 – Burford St – Serious Criminal Trespass

Unknown offender/s kicked in front door of unoccupied premises further entering. Nil stolen

26/7/2024 – Hutchison St – Attempt Serious Criminal Trespass

Unknown offender/s tried to gain entry to business through window. Nil entry.

27/7/2024 – Nicholas St – Attempt Serious Criminal Trespass and Property Damage

Male offender attempted to gain entry on house causing approximately \$500. The offender also entered two unlocked vehicles in the driveway prior but nil stolen.

1/8/2024 – Hutchison St – Property Damage

Male offender damaged CCTV camera on premises to the value of \$400

5/8/2024 – Hutchison St – Theft

Bluetooth Speak stolen from business valued at \$17.99. Offender identified and dealt with.

6/8/2024 – Throw St – Serious Criminal Trespass

Unknown suspects have gained entry into vacant premises by smashing front plasterboard.

REMINDER: Consultation on KNIFE CRIME closes on 25 August 2024

Attorney-General Kyam Maher MLC said, "Knife incidents both locally and interstate highlight just why it's so important our knife crime laws are responsible, tough, and able to help authorities keep our community safe."

"South Australia has often led the nation with addressing knife crime – including significant criminal offences for carrying knives and measures to keep them out of the hands of children – and now is an opportune time to look at how we can improve on our existing laws."

"This discussion paper canvasses several options to strengthen our laws, including preventative measures – such as restricting access to knives and a licence for people wishing to own certain types of knives."

"We are also keen to explore the possibility of whether police powers should be expanded, by allowing them to conduct metal detector searches on public transport."

AG Kyam Maher says, "I would urge all interested South Australians to have their say on this important issue."

Get involved

We want to hear from the South Australian community and work together to maintain the safety of our state.

Find out more:

- read the Discussion Paper
- see the knife crime summary
- take a look at our FAQs

Have your say by:

- emailing a submission to LLPSubmissions@sa.gov.au
- taking our survey.

What are the next steps?

Your feedback will help inform the Government's decision to amend our existing knife laws, and ensure any changes are fair and workable for the community.

To read the discussion paper or make a submission, visit www.yoursay.sa.gov.au/knife-crime



Fundamental Principles of Australian Anti-Corruption Commissions



These twelve principles enable Anti-Corruption and Integrity Commissions (Anti-Corruption Commissions) to independently and effectively undertake their functions. They provide a legislative and policy framework within which Australian Anti-Corruption Commissions may achieve national consistency and readily collaborate.

The principles express a shared approach to engaging with Australia's obligations under the United Nations Convention against Corruption.

1. The ability to consider referrals from any third party

Anti-Corruption Commissions should be empowered to consider an allegation of corruption referred to it by any third party. Third parties, in this context, include public sector employees, heads of government agencies or departments, holders of public office and members of the public.

Empowering Anti-Corruption Commissions to receive allegations of corruption from any third party will ensure that the Commission can consider allegations detected by a government agency as well as allegations that are reported by whistle-blowers.

2. The ability to commence an investigation on own volition (own motion powers)

Anti-Corruption Commissions should be empowered to commence investigations into corruption or maladministration on its own motion, so long as the investigation falls within the jurisdiction of the Commission. This "own motion power" enables a Commission to initiate investigations into allegations that have been detected by the Commission, rather than limiting its investigation powers to allegations that have been referred to it.

3. A requirement for the heads of public sector agencies to report allegations of corruption to the Anti- Corruption Commission

In keeping with the responsibility of public sector agency heads for the integrity of their agency, public sector agency heads should be subject to a mandatory duty to report allegations of corruption relating to their agency to the Anti-Corruption Commission.

This duty to report may also be expanded, as appropriate, to other public officials whose functions might identify allegations of corruption within the Anti-Corruption Commission's jurisdiction.

4. Protections for whistleblowers and witnesses

A person who refers information or gives evidence to a Commission should be immune from any criminal, civil, administrative or disciplinary liability, and from the enforcement against them of contractual rights or remedies, for doing so. The taking of any reprisal against a person for giving information or evidence to a Commission should be an offence. However, these protections should not exempt such a person from liability for providing intentionally false or misleading information or evidence, nor from liability for past conduct of the person that is disclosed by the person.

5. Coercive powers to obtain information and evidence

In addition to traditional law enforcement investigative tools to obtain information and evidence, Anti-Corruption Commissions should be able to compel the production of information or documents, and conduct hearings, as a coercive tool to obtain evidence.

Anti-Corruption Commissions should be able to compel and use records that would usually attract an immunity from production where it can be demonstrated that it is necessary and proportionate to advance an investigation. This includes the express abrogation of the privilege against self-incrimination in respect of evidence given or documents or information produced, but with corresponding use immunity provisions, so that evidence obtained under compulsion cannot be used against the witness from whom it is obtained (though it can be used against others) in a criminal prosecution (except a prosecution for an offence against the relevant integrity legislation).

The features of hearings in this context include:

- The power to summons witnesses
- The power to require production of information and documents
- The power to take evidence subject to penalty for perjury (on oath or affirmation)

Anti-Corruption Commissions should be able to conduct hearings either in public or private. The types of considerations in deciding whether to conduct a hearing in public or in private include reputation, witness welfare, privacy, confidentiality, any risk of compromising a fair trial in potential criminal proceedings, and the public interest.

6. The ability to refer matters to a prosecuting authority

Anti-Corruption Commissions are, by their very nature, investigation agencies. They should be empowered (or not restricted in their ability) to refer briefs of evidence assembled as a result of their investigations directly to a prosecuting authority, such as the Director of Public Prosecutions, for assessment for prosecution action.

7. The ability to make recommendations

As with other integrity agencies, such as the auditor-general and ombudsman, it is an important aspect of the work of an Anti-Corruption Commission to be able to make recommendations to heads of public sector agencies that arise from the Commission's work. These recommendations may relate to individuals or systemic issues identified through the Commission's work and have the aim of strengthening the integrity framework and anti-corruption controls and preventing the corrupt conduct from recurring.

As a matter of best practice, an Anti-Corruption Commission should also be able to make recommendations to the public sector as a whole, either through a recommendation tabled in Parliament or provided to an appropriate Minister that relate to addressing corruption vulnerabilities or risks generally within the public sector.

8. The ability to report on investigations and make public statements

One of the key ways that an Anti-Corruption Commission can give insight into their operations is through the ability to report on investigations and make public statements. This should include the ability to oversight and report on the implementation of any recommendations. This is important to provide transparency in relation to the way that an Anti-Corruption Commission undertakes their work, to provide assurance to the public and public sector that corruption allegations are appropriately dealt with and as a mechanism of general deterrence.

In preparing a report on an investigation, Anti-Corruption Commissions should provide procedural fairness to persons to whom a finding is proposed to be made. In deciding whether to publish a report or make a public statement, Anti-Corruption Commissions should balance the public interest in disclosing the information with any unreasonable prejudicial consequences that might result.

9. A corruption prevention function

As well as having an investigation function, it is best practice for an Anti-Corruption Commission to also have a corruption prevention function. Investigations, by their very nature, focus on events that have already occurred. In contrast, a corruption prevention function focuses on identifying vulnerabilities and potential mitigations to prevent the event from occurring in the first place or avoid similar events occurring in the same or separate entities. This is a crucial element in a robust anti-corruption framework.

The corruption prevention function requires adequate resourcing to be able to support public sector agencies and public officials to mitigate the corruption risks that they face and put in place strong corruption prevention controls. The function may include multiple elements such as education, engagement, research, advice, support and specific projects.

10. A sufficient and predictable budget

An Anti-Corruption Commission's capacity to fulfil its statutory functions will be limited by its budget. The Commission's efficacy can therefore be undermined by budgetary restrictions. The threat of a potential reduction in budget also threatens an Anti-Corruption Commission's perceived, or actual, independence.

It is acknowledged that all government agencies will have some budgetary limitations. However, an Anti-Corruption Commission's budget should be largely quarantined from the political process. The way in which this is achieved will depend on the jurisdiction, but could involve a budget being set by Treasury, with oversight from a Parliamentary Committee. Any funding model should be transparent, certain and flexible, promoting accountability by both the funding body and the anti-corruption agency.

11. Transparency of appointments

The process for appointment of integrity commissioners impacts on the community's perceptions of an Anti-Corruption Commission's independence. Commissioner appointments should be made on the basis of merit following an open and transparent appointment process. Selection should be measured against publicly available criteria, with an independent panel putting forward a shortlist of suitable applicants to the relevant Minister for appointment. Merit should be the dominant consideration in selection.

The Council of Australasian Tribunals Tribunal Independence in Appointments - Best Practice Guide offers a useful template for this process.

12. Effective and proportionate oversight

Given the powers available to Anti-Corruption Commissions, effective and proportionate oversight of Commissions should be established, to ensure transparency and accountability. Appropriate oversight mechanisms include an independent inspectorate and parliamentary oversight through a dedicated parliamentary committee.

LOCAL GOVT COLLAPSING AT COOBER PEDY

MINISTER HON JOE SZAKACS MP LISTENS TO LOCAL'S VIEWS

The (new) Minister for Local Government, the Hon Joe Szakacs MP and Ms Alex Hart, the Director of the Office of Local Government, visited Coober Pedy on Wednesday 31 July 2024. Minister Szakacs was handed the Local Government Portfolio recently, when Minister Geoff Brock needed to step back.

A public forum was held at the Italian Club where Minister Szakacs invited attendees to comment or ask questions.

The delegation heard local residents express their views of the current state of their town and its management 6 years into administration. What we understand is that the delegation will deliberate over the situation and with a view to seeking a resolution

Letter to Editor: "I attended the Forum to hear what is happening in our Town. Since Administrators have been in charge, we don't believe any of their spin.

I wanted to see if I believe in this latest Minister Joe Szakacs. I actually think he just might have his heart in it and was mostly listening to us...? Yes...but as usual it will all be forgotten 5 mins after they walk out of meeting..(Most times, these meetings are for the Minister to try and help his/her career, not to help us)

Hopefully of course, the Minister will go back home and have a good hard think about how he can help our Town, by investigating ALL avenues from State / Federal Govt to wipe the council's Debt, so we/they can start afresh with ongoing accountability and annual audits open to Ratepayers in the future.... There is always a way to do this, if they really want to!!!!

Federal Govt wastes Billions \$\$\$\$ every year on projects that Blind Freddy knows are only vote catchers!!

Why isn't there a State or Fed authourity that oversees Councils Big spends/decisions? And why did they allow those who committed maladministration to get away Scot free for all the debt they left our town to carry!!! Where have the ICAC powers gone to????

I felt the meeting was run fairly well, except the Chair who is meant to be in charge of the meeting, should have been handling insulting contributors, and not left up to members of the community.

The Council should get off their backsides and action immediately the removal of ALL derelict buildings in town...they are an eye sore...Council doesn't seem to do anything else...except pick up my Rubbish Bin fortnightly and collect my Rates \$...Don't they have a Works Dept? Get them to do some meaningful, regular work, maintaining the town. **Long term \$Ratepayer.**

BOTTOM LINE, what physical improvement on the ground in Coober Pedy, is the SA Government proud to highlight?"

Local resident and Ratepayer, Mike Gillam gives his analysis of the Community Forum with Minister Joe Szakacs MP where locals voiced their frustrations about the dire financial situation the ratepayers have been placed in, at the hands of Government appointed administrators.

"My belief that SA Govt funding is massively focussed on creating inner city architectural prestige in Adelaide while remote communities are being starved of essential services."



Resident - Ratepayer Mike Gillam addresses the 'state of the nation' in remote Coober Pedy

"I do hope the meeting was more than a hollow gesture, a means for the community to blow off steam. I'm quite certain that a great many people stayed away because they have seen no evidence of the SA Government responding positively to community concerns expressed on previous occasions over the years.

Overwhelmingly, locals believe that nothing will change as a result of their legitimate demands for justice. That said, more than 100 ratepayers did attend, a surprising number for a population of 1700 or so."

"The SA Government is endlessly kicking the can down the road, callously deferring any and all funding needed to address critical infrastructure. This includes an

appalling failure to rectify the parlous state of the water supply to a continuing long term failure dating from 2011 to negotiate an **ILUA for the township of Coober Pedy** which is demoralising every citizen and severely impacting investor confidence. Meanwhile as infrastructure is deteriorating property rates and charges are skyrocketing!"

"I was incredibly disappointed by the lack of accountability on display by Govt representatives who blame their predecessors constantly, always claiming they inherited a terrible financial position. From who - themselves!"

"The current administration claims it's crucial to review and resolve the level of services required by the community before they can move forward. Seriously! Despite raising rates and other charges the performance of the state Government administration compares poorly with that of the original Progress Association."

"Do we really need to workshop what should be a desirable level of local Govt services?!"

"I believe it was 1986 that the Coober Pedy community voted 90% against replacing the original Progress Association with a Town Council and their wishes were ignored. History will show this population clearly understood that the local Government administration being promoted by Adelaide politicians and bureaucrats would decrease efficiency, increase costs, red tape, box ticking and endless reporting."

"In summary I'd like to know what tangible physical action the South Australian Government has taken to improve the lives of Coober Pedy residents? I'm not talking about reports, creative accounting, policy documents or services audits.

I'd like the administration to clearly state, after 5 years of total control over this place and the lives of its inhabitants, after spending millions in top heavy Governance and consultants, what physical improvement on the ground in Coober Pedy, is it proud to highlight?"

BELOW: Coober Pedy locals witness the collapse of Local Government !

South Australians who dared to speak up when local government began failing them more than 8 years ago, are now handed the escalated debt to personally pay off, just as the revolving doors swing open again. Democratic justice seems unavailable to the innocent victims of a failed system in remote areas!



COOBER PEDY AREA SCHOOL, VISIT FROM MINISTER FOR EDUCATION BLAIR BOYER

The Education Minister Blair Boyer visited the Coober Pedy Area School on Thursday 8th August to launch the Country Education Strategy as part of its \$13.5 million investment in country education over the next three years.

The Malinauskas Labor Government will invest \$13.5 million in new funding for country education over the next three years.

The announcement was made today as the Minister for Education, Training and Skills Blair Boyer visited students and staff at Coober Pedy Area School.

This will help ensure all children and young people can have the same opportunities in every community across South Australia.

The new Country Education Strategy, released on Thursday will focus on:

- **Bolstering teacher numbers, by actively recruiting and offering incentives to encourage early career teachers to live and work in the country.**
- **Expanding subject choice, by using technology to connect country students to specialist teachers.**
- **Supporting country students to access new educational experiences, including financial assistance for camps and excursions.**
- **Supporting students to build their understanding of post-school pathways.**

These four focus areas were identified by a collaborative group of country teachers and leaders as being the most important for country education over the coming years.

More than 9,500 staff work in the regions, representing over 30 per cent of the public school workforce. Of the more than 174,000 students enrolled in public schools, around 50,000 are enrolled in country schools.

Another key component will be a trial of an excursion fund for Year 7 country students on a school card, to experience camps and field trips.

The trial is aimed at Year 7 students to assist them with transitioning into a secondary school by helping them to get to know their peers outside of a school setting. Excursions help support a sense of connection and belonging with their new school and peers.

Significant progress has been made to improve the supports available to country schools and preschools across a broad range of areas including staffing, allied health services, ICT infrastructure, and housing.

A hub model has been introduced to provide better access to speech pathology and psychology services in areas where these were previously scarce, combining face-to-face and tele-health services.

Recent upgrades to ICT infrastructure have led to better internet connectivity, enabling more engaging digital learning experiences.

Principals and site leaders have received greater support to access housing for educators moving to the country and managing short-term, unexpected teacher absences through centrally coordinated approaches.

New approaches have been developed to attract early career teachers to country schools, including support for pre-service teachers to undertake placements and the 'Teach First in Country' initiative for teachers taking up their first role in a regional location.

Minister for Education, Training and Skills Blair Boyer said, "Growing up in a regional area and attending regional schools, I was acutely aware of the challenges rural and regional schools face."

Page 8



Coober Pedy Area School Principal Maurice Saah, Teachers, Laura Brooks and Naomi Findlay, Minister for Education, Training and Skills Blair Boyer



Minister Blair Boyer meets with the Junior School Students at Coober Pedy Area School



Senior students spend some time with the Minister



Local mother and son meet with Minister Boyer



Story time with Minister Boyer at CPAS



Coober Pedy Area School Principal Maurice Saah, Minister for Education, Training and Skills Blair Boyer

"Through this investment, the Malinauskas Labor Government is determined to address the most pressing issues that are affecting our country students and teachers."

"Workforce sustainability is a key focus, as is engaging learning experiences and a better understanding of post-school pathways."

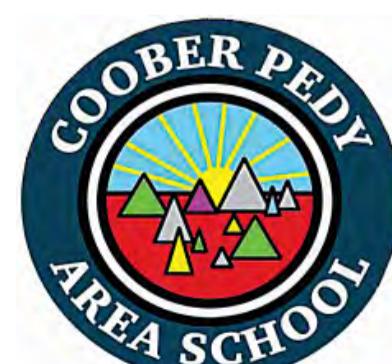
"I am also excited by the excursions program which will support country schools to provide valuable learning experiences, that these students wouldn't otherwise get."

Coober Pedy Area School Principal Maurice Saah said, "The Coober Pedy Area School and our community are very appreciative of this valuable initiative."

"Last year, we received extensive fly-in fly-out teacher support as part of an innovative program launched by the strategy to address short-term teacher vacancies in country regions."

"In addition to ensuring the effective operation of the school, these teachers have contributed to improved educational outcomes including supporting students through SACE and NAPLAN."

"The program has ensured continuity of learning for our students as well as provided a stable staffing position for our school."



Article below was published in 2018 highlighting the plight of the remote Opal Mining Town of Coober Pedy being neglected and left to die by the South Australian Government due to no Indigenous Land Use Agreement in place. The inaction time frame is 2011 - 2024 = 13 years! PRIORITIES?

What is the point of trying to prop up a council structure designed for an economically viable town, when the town's economy is being depleted through it's inability to develop viz. NO ILUA, NO DEVELOPMENT?

Local resident Sue Britt raised this issue in the Forum with Local Government Minister last week, and we thank her. The ball is in the South Australian's Government's court!

OPAL CAPITAL COOBER PEDY LEFT TO DIE?

8 years and no new developments

By Margaret Mackay

The Native Title determination over Crown Land was handed down at Coober Pedy by Justice Mansfield on May 11th, 2011 and still no sign of an Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA) that was to immediately follow for the Coober Pedy Township and was originally estimated by the government to be 6 months after the determination.

Following a Letter to the Editor from **Licenced Surveyor Mr. Richard Abbott** on 29 November 2018 a number of locals have admitted that their development are on hold or even worse, cancelled, due to not being able to freehold their land.

"My concerns are the time it is taking to implement the required ILUA for the township as it is stifling development and an economic impediment in Coober Pedy", said Richard Abbott.

"The delay has also prevented applications to create freehold land parcels for dugouts, enable freehold land owners to rectify underground dug out encroachments with abutting Crown land and or enable freehold land owners to expand their parcel by acquiring adjoining Crown land," he said.

Coober Pedy is showing signs of being left to die since freeholding came to a halt in 2010.

If people cannot freehold their titles, they generally they won't risk building or improvements, so builders aren't building, (reduced to renovations), tradesmen are not employing, trade retailers are not selling fixtures and fittings and so on..

It is believed that because of the delay and uncertainty in real estate values that a considerable number have abandoned their freehold applications.

A Statement from the Department for Environment and Water received this week states: "Native title has been determined to exist over parts of Coober Pedy. The freeholding of licences has been on hold during the period of 2010 to 2018 due to the uncertainty as to where native title exists over the town. The transfer of Licences has and continues to be permissible."

"While transfer of licence is possible the reality is that the uncertainty of native title tenure means no applications for new licenses or free holding crown land have occurred for the last 8 years, resulting in a substantial loss of rate income for the Council" said Mr Abbott.

Opal miner Des Roffey made a conscious decision to retire in Coober Pedy after a career in the Police Force and in Hospitality. Coober Pedy was to be his "forever home" where he would combine opal mining with retirement and buy or build his own underground home. Des was recently elected to the local council.

In Des's search to find the right property he has come across what he believes is a town struggling economically



As a result of Mr Abbott's [Pic insert] letter a fitting example discovered by the CPRT that the bituminised road in front of Council's CEO residence (in yellow) on North West Ridge Rd is shown on the aerial plans to be running across Crown Land and not in the designated public road boundaries

and with very little ability to develop due to no Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA) and the inability to freehold properties. "A normal prudent person wouldn't entertain leasehold. I am simply looking for freehold land so I can build a dugout."

"In town here there are for sale signs everywhere. If a savvy investor came into town and the [development] opportunity was there he would be snapping them up like there is no tomorrow."

"The same dugouts are for sale, at the same price year in year out but in most cases the prices are stable," he said.

"The right block of land or dugout may be for sale and I have come across a number of dugouts that were partially developed and then abandoned some years before. But improving on a dwelling that is not yet freeholded is too risky", he said. There are quite a number of dugouts that are partially completed but I think they have stopped work purely because of that."

Mr. Abbott said that he is aware that the Acting CEO Colin Pitman recently sent a letter to the Premier requesting funding to enable both his survey plans and the process to be altered to enable the creation of public roads over the publicly used access tracks, now subject to ILUA and also for the ongoing funding for their maintenance. As currently the Council is unable to achieve government funding for track maintenance over Crown Land.

On the 9th November 2017 John Rau Deputy Premier and Attorney General responded to John Darley, MLC (as a result of Mr Abbott requesting John Darley ask a question in parliament on the ILUA delay.)

The Rau letter stated that the Coober Pedy Council was updated through their lawyers and that the government offered to meet with the CEO (then Ms Fiona Hogan) for the purpose of exploring what impacts the delay on the preparation of the ILUA and unanticipated complexities might have on the Council and the community, and whether there is was any need to try and reach an interim agreement with the native title holders to allow some key developments to proceed within the town.

Mr. Abbott was told that Crown Law did not receive a written response from council regarding the economic impact of the long term delay in the ILUA being approved and stated: "I had a meeting with Ms Hogan in November 2016 and she said that all matters association with Native Title and the ILUA and the roads were to be handled by Rodney Phillips the Works Manager," he said.

Interestingly the motto for the Government of South Australian Department for Environment and Water is "Helping South Australians conserve, sustain and prosper"

So why is the Opal Capital, Coober Pedy now left to die?

DON'T PAY YOUR RATES until a locally elected council occurs in Nov 2026, or pay by drip feed



The recent Forum with the Minister for Local Govt needs close scrutiny because, in my opinion if we don't, we are going to be on Struggle Street forever.

All the locals in the room were passionate and vocal about the future of Coober Pedy, yet the Primary Administrator Mr Geoff Sheridan who chaired the meeting was clearly focussed on his own personal survival and failed miserably to defend his position. Incompetence was directed at him numerous times yet he sat mute.

In my view, the minister clearly supports a poorly performing administration and made it abundantly clear the government will not bail out Coober Pedy's financial debt. He was on a mission with a message.

To those who have followed the government appointed Administration from 24th January 2019 it was the same message then, but from the Liberal party. Nothing has changed. Politicians come and go but the bureaucratic structure stays the same and the Local Government Authority network knows and understands how, when, where and why the DCCP hit the wall.

We are now into the 6th year of administration when the original time allocation was 12 months to return the council to a sustainable position. It seems that everyone except the Minister has recognised the problem. He clearly enunciated the difference between Federal, State and Local government and the financial relationship between each and their responsibilities to a bankrupt council.

So, an inept Administration continues with the full support of the government until local government elections occur in November 2026. No local representation within the administrative network until then, and therefore if the transition to a locally elected council transpires it will be a dysfunctional council led by an administration clearly out of its depth.

The 'duty of care' by the government to the DCCP citizen needs to be tested.

The Administrator bleated to the Minister that the council is showing a profit for the first time in ten years. Former CEO Dean Miller told the Liberal premier in 2020 the very same thing.

The real test with statements like this is whether the Local Government Finance Authority will finance a loan to the DCCP. It formally advised the Administrator it wouldn't lend money in 2020, and the same advice prevails today.

The suggestion that an accountant can make the books do somersaults depends entirely on which financial entity swallows the mathematics. The LGFA didn't then and won't now otherwise the Administrator would be announcing it to the world.

Private enterprise doesn't survive by raising the cost of its product in the same manner as the council has raised the cost of water, power and rates to pay for the outrageous costs of employees and contractors.

COOBER PEDY LACKING GOVERNANCE & VISION (Among many other failings)

I felt compelled to attend the meeting with the Minister at the Italian Club. The fact is that I feel Coober Pedy is lacking governance and vision.

It was pleasing to see people speaking up on the night about the impacts of 5 years of Administration, but I am not yet sure if they were really heard. I for one am not expecting to see many changes.

Along with others I felt strongly about all of the issues facing ratepayers. Rate increases, state of water, state of roads, filthy streets, anti-social behaviour, environmental issues, pollution, degradation of infrastructure.

It felt disappointing at the end of the evening when no one outlined the next steps.

Coober Pedy Ratepayer (supplied)

The ILUA issue...has adversely affected development and property values at Coober Pedy

I attended the Public Forum with Minister Joe Szakacs at the Italian Club last week for a number of reasons.

- to show appreciation for Minister Szakacs' effort to come to Coober Pedy and meet with the community
- to show the State Government that residents care about this town
- to bring up the ILUA issue, a State Government broken promise that has adversely affected development and property values

Community voices were heard but I am not satisfied that what was said will be remembered or acted on. I saw no evidence of note taking or recording.

I do not hope for changes. I have come to my own conclusions about what the State Government intends to do about Coober Pedy. Any changes will not benefit the ratepayers. I think about what the State Government did to the people of Mintabie. The politicians do not care about the people (employees, business owners, retired residents, volunteers) who pay their rates and utility bills and keep the town running.

The fact that we ratepayers are being blamed for the millions of dollars of Council debt due to CEO and administrator incompetence is the issue I feel strongly about. We are told we haven't paid enough in rates to cover our demands for services. That is ridiculous. I have no way of knowing how much money admin wastes on the CPT facilitator, lawyers, consultants, consultations, court cases, REX fares, accommodation, forgiven utility bills, plant & equipment hire, etc.

I am not disappointed as I had no expectations. I thought the meeting was run well and I liked hearing the experiences and ideas of the people who spoke.

I would like to know why Tourism SA insists on joining Outback with the Flinders Ranges? It has also lumped the Far North in with the Mid North/ Flinders Ranges at times. People from South Australia travelling in America or Europe may be asked where they are from. If they are from Adelaide, the response is likely to be "where is that?" If they can say Coober Pedy, the response is likely to be, "Do you live underground?" or "Opals." People around the world know about Coober Pedy. Does the South Australian government not recognise the value of name recognition?

Kind regards,
 Sue Britt, Ratepayer

WHY NO 'BAILOUT? Despite Coober Pedy District Councillors, at the time did NOT ask for a bail-out, the following article explains how the TAX PAYER PRESSURE GROUP, The Australian Taxpayers' Alliance (ATA) made it very clear that their 75,000+ members (voters) would not support it.

If ever there was a time to ensure that the Opal Capital of the World was supplied with an operating ILUA, it would have been then. Apathy of remote areas, and the concept that they are of little consequence at election time (Lyn Breuer - "Mintabie, not enough votes") must cease to be the culture in Australian politics. (Editor)

COOBER PEDY COUNCIL HAS NOT ASKED FOR A BAILOUT

The Australian Taxpayers' Alliance (ATA), a 75,000+ member grassroots advocacy group representing Australia's taxpayers has called for Coober Pedy council to be put into administration to shield taxpayers from footing the bill for its [alleged] \$6 million+ debts racked up by maladministration, and demanded greater transparency in spending by councils across the nation through an online expenditure portal in order to deliver accountability and fairness for taxpayers.

In a media release distributed widely Satya Marar, ATA Director of Policy said, "Hardworking South Australian taxpayers don't deserve to see their money spent on undoing the mistakes of incompetent public officials.

Whilst the ATA and Mr Marar make some very good points they have not considered that Coober Pedy is also in South Australia and are perhaps unwittingly suggesting to punish the taxpayers of this town.

Coober Pedy's newly elected Mayor, Les Hoad said this week, "There are taxpayers in Coober Pedy also, however the Council has not asked for a bailout, neither have we discussed one."

At a recent meeting of the DCCP it was established that the Council had \$1.8 Million in debenture loans available and ready to draw down, but would await a Ministerial decision before activating it. (and recorded in the minutes)

Mr. Marar continued saying, "Coober Pedy Council has repeatedly breached its obligations under the Local Government Act, entered into an irresponsible \$200 million electricity deal underwritten by taxpayers, and committed basic errors such as a failure to budget past losses and other acts of serious maladministration.

"The Council should be held to account and must pay for its mistakes through its own resources, asset sales and stringent financial measures, before taxpayers are forced to pay a single cent to rescue it from a history of inexcusably bad decisions and poor stewardship of public funds.

The Local Government Act and many other Acts of Parliament including the Ombudsman's Act are seriously outdated and lacking in strength, but are slowly tightening up with the introduction of the Ratepayer Protection Bill introduced by Shadow Minister for Local Government Tony Piccolo. The Bill received bi-partisan agreement in Parliament recently and will update the LG Act 1999.

On the 10 December 2018 a Special Council Meeting was held at Coober Pedy Council to finalise and approve a letter to Local Government Minister Stephan Knoll, in effect to show cause why he shouldn't put them into administration. <http://cooberpedy.sa.gov.au/councilagenda>

Cr. George Naumovic, newly elected council member and former Chairperson of the Coober Pedy Concerned Resident's Group presented two amendments to the orginal draft letter to the Minister for council's consideration (There were three draft amendments all up)

Acting CEO Mr. Colin Pitman read aloud Mr. Naumovic's proposed draft and amendments that acknowledge the Ombudsman's finding as accurate at point 1) and at point 6) stated intentions to conduct internal investigations on certain allegations. Community members in the public gallery expressed some concern that the amended letters were not discussed.

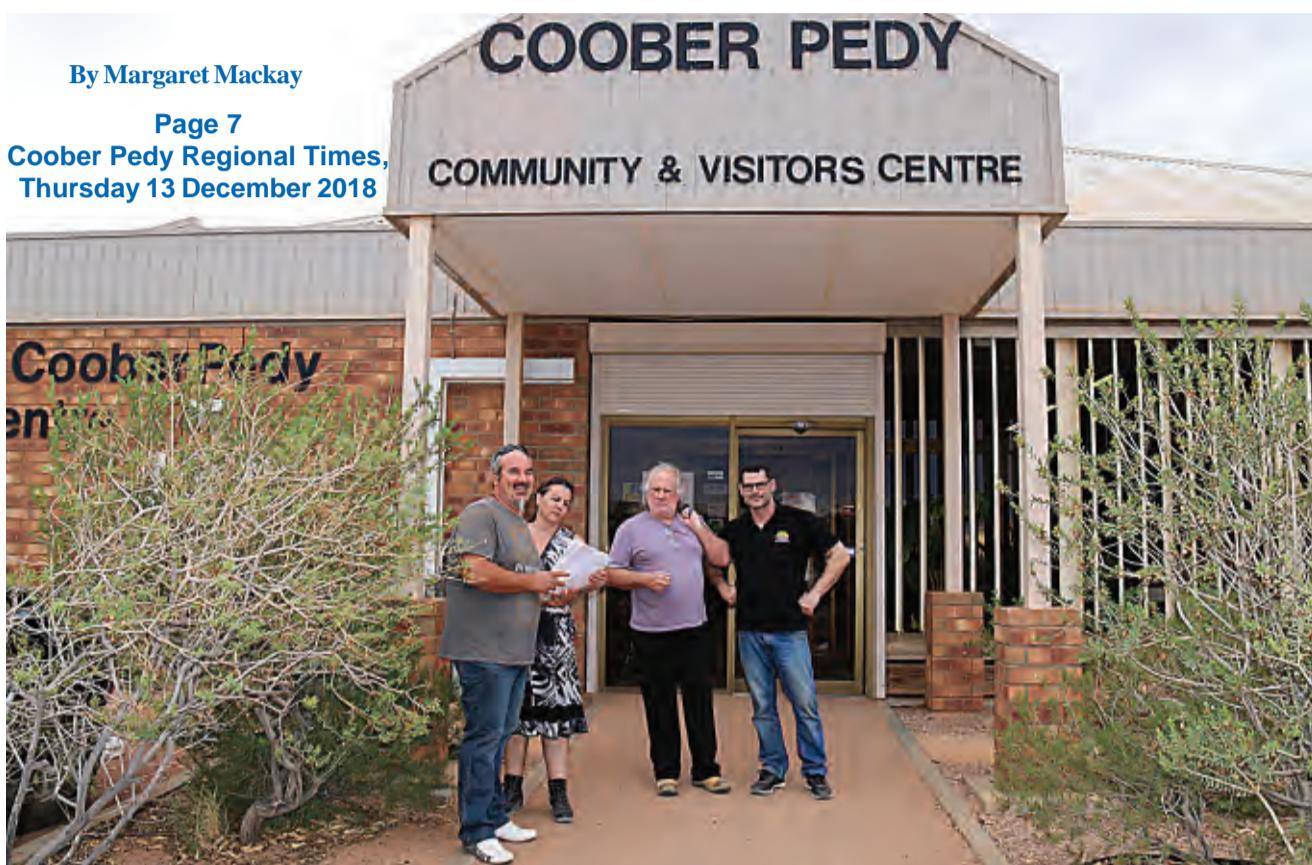
Excerpt with proposed amendments by Cr. Naumovic

Dear Minister Knoll, In responding to the Ombudsman's report on the performance of Coober Pedy Council and your letter of the 22nd of November wish to make the following points -

• The council agrees that the council of the day should have tendered the power contract after undertaking a thorough prudential review and did so with full knowledge that it was an action contrary to the local government Act and are guilty of committing maladministration

By Margaret Mackay

Page 7
Coober Pedy Regional Times,
 Thursday 13 December 2018



After the Special Meeting 10-12-2018 Cr Nick Brellas (left) and Cr George Naumovic (centre) field comments from community members outside the council offices.

• In responding council consider it is unfair and unjust to provide the council with just 15 working days. • The current council and the administration on the whole was not in existence or employed at that time therefore any comments made on the report are constrained by staff and council knowledge of the matters referred to.

• The state government having received the report before the election and this council having been elected by popular vote, find the prospect of you moving the council into administration completely diametrically contrary to the will of the people of Coober Pedy and potentially a miscarriage of justice.

• The exercise of your powers to dismiss the council and replace them in a manner in which the government would be complicit with an administrator with no accountability to the community is considered unjust and unfair to the voters who elected the current council.

• *However the council are intending to investigate the allegations that have arisen in the ICAC / Ombudsman report and the Auditor General's report and where necessary refer these matters to the DPP where appropriate.* Etc, etc...

The submission was defeated by a Division of 3/2.

The three members who voted against the amendments were Crs Boro Rapaic, Neville Mitchell and Ian Crombie. Voting for the amendments were Cr G Naumovic and Cr N Brellas. There were only 5 elected members present at the meeting.

Cr Rapaic who led the discussions on the letter to the minister was part of the previous council that voted to approve the \$192 Million power purchase agreement where due diligence had not been effected. Cr. Crombie was also part of the previous council but was not present at the Council meeting of 19 January 2016 when the power deal was approved. <http://cooberpedy.sa.gov.au/webdata/resources/minutesAgendas/2016%2001.pdf>

A question in the community is: Should Councillor Rapaic have declared a conflict of interest on the motion that concerned the conduct of the previous council in the letter to Minister Knoll, having been found to have committed serious maladministration in the execution of the power deal in the Ombudsman's Report and in fact, asked to 'consider his position'?

Suggestions for the Minister, gleaned from community conversations

In considering your verdict in your new role as Local Government Minister Mr. Knoll, please consider that outdated Acts of Parliament have allowed maladministration to thrive in our councils thus putting tax-payer and ratepayer monies at risk.

Complaints about the previous council at Coober Pedy have been considerable and are by no means exhausted. The continual lack of satisfactory outcomes has depleted the spirit of the Opal Capital of the World that has struggled with bullying, nepotism, abuses of power and other forms of dubious conduct for many years.

Allowing maladministration to go unchecked only punishes struggling local families and businesses in the community.

Governments in pertaining to serve the people, need also to listen to the people. Two petitions to dismiss the previous council were presented to Parliament over the past few years, and ignored! Community input is as follow:

Suggestion 1.) "Expel members of the past council and create a bi-election to help supplement the fresh eyes and talent that might better represent a new era in Coober Pedy's development."

Suggestion 2.) "Send a strong message that monopolies, cliques, and factions are not welcome in our council by reducing the number of council members. Clamp down on ad-hoc meetings."

Suggestion 3.) "A potential class action against the previous council(lors) for [Inter alia] the wrongful exercise of their lawful authority, betrayal of resident trust."

A spokesperson for a group of residents has told the CPRT that, "Preliminary advice has been sought with meetings to be held in the new year to consider options and discuss allegations of betrayal of trust; senior management and councillor's lack of transparency, incompetence issues. That some councillors achieved votes using an election premise of transparency, but that the council had virtually governed the town in secret, leaving residents with a staggering debt to repay."

Mr. Knoll, the ratepayers and voters of this town await your decision however they would first welcome a community consultation with you.

POSITION VACANT

I can work in a multi-disciplinary team which helps me to get the best results for my clients. I am part of a supportive and caring team environment, where my colleagues are my best friends. There are many opportunities to diversify my role and continually challenge myself to improve the lives of country people and their families.

Facilities Services Officer
Ongoing Full Time
Eyre and Far North
Local Health Network
Coober Pedy Health Services
Coober Pedy
Job Ref: 866504
www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/careers



POSITION VACANT

I can work in a multi-disciplinary team which helps me to get the best results for my clients. I am part of a supportive and caring team environment, where my colleagues are my best friends. There are many opportunities to diversify my role and continually challenge myself to improve the lives of country people and their families.

Administration Officer
Ongoing Part Time
Eyre and Far North
Local Health Network
Community Health
Coober Pedy
Job Ref: 870782
www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/careers



POSITION VACANT

I can work in a multi-disciplinary team which helps me to get the best results for my clients. I am part of a supportive and caring team environment, where my colleagues are my best friends. There are many opportunities to diversify my role and continually challenge myself to improve the lives of country people and their families.

Services Assistant
Ongoing Part Time
Eyre and Far North
Local Health Network
Coober Pedy Health Services
Coober Pedy
Job Ref: 870718
www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/careers



POSITION VACANT

I can work in a multi-disciplinary team which helps me to get the best results for my clients. I am part of a supportive and caring team environment, where my colleagues are my best friends. There are many opportunities to diversify my role and continually challenge myself to improve the lives of country people and their families.

Cook
Ongoing Part Time
Eyre and Far North
Local Health Network
Ancillary Health Services
Coober Pedy
Job Ref: 870721
www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/careers



COOBER PEDY TRIP

Weekend: 20-22 September

Why? 1. To see where Ntaria 'family' passed away in 1960.
2. On Saturday 21 September at 11am, to unveil a plaque to remember the place.
3. Plant a tree or shrub or two!!

PLAQUE READS:

In this vicinity lie the remains of five Arrarnta men who perished when their car broke down during a severe heat wave in excess of 50°C in January 1960. They had set out from Coober Pedy to drive to William Creek.

Role Entata Laughing Willie
Frank Maynard Jackaboy Rakara
Jimmy Graham

This memorial erected with support of family and friends in 2020

If you or your family members are interested or know of anyone who might like to attend this ceremony down along the Coober Pedy to William Creek road:
1. Let them know of the above details...."spread the word around..."
2. Work out your own travel, accommodation, food details.
3. Inform Ingkaarta Neville Doecke from Hermannsburg/Ntaria that you will be attending (give numbers)
Mobile: 0498 583 808 Email: doecke_nh@gmail.com

MECHANICAL

RED DIRT

Service and Repair

Workshop is now open week days - Call in and see Marcus

Lot 66 Seventeen Mile Rd (Opposite Lion's Club)
<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100085582637596>

PHONE: 0488007450 or FB Messenger



Diagnostics

Auto electrical
Air conditioning
Air-con regassing
Diesel mechanic
Mining Machinery
Heavy Vehicles
Vehicle parking

Motor Repairs
Servicing
Exhaust
Brakes
Truck/Trailer repairs
Steering/suspension
Clutch/transmission
Radios and cooling

PUBLIC NOTICE - AGM



COOBER PEDY COUNTRY FIRE SERVICE

AGM

**Wednesday 28th AUGUST
2024**

Time: 6.00pm

**Location: CFS Headquarters
in Hutchison Street.
Volunteer inquiries welcome**

POSITION VACANT

I can work in a multi-disciplinary team which helps me to get the best results for my clients. I am part of a supportive and caring team environment, where my colleagues are my best friends. There are many opportunities to diversify my role and continually challenge myself to improve the lives of country people and their families.

Administration Officer
Ongoing Part Time
Eyre and Far North
Local Health Network
Coober Pedy Hospital
Coober Pedy
Job Ref: 855649
www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/careers



POSITION VACANT



MANAGER, STRATEGY & SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPES

**Landscape South Australia –
Alintyjara Wilurara
Adelaide or Ceduna
Full-time, Long Term Contract (4 years)
Vacancy ID: 612361
\$121,107 to \$125,679 p.a. (ASO8)**

The Alintyjara Wilurara Landscape Board is seeking an experienced Manager, Strategy and Sustainable Landscape to lead a team and provide high quality and effective strategic and operational program planning and delivery. The Manager is responsible for leading the development of sustainable landscape management policies, providing advice, sourcing and securing funding, leading the delivery of key projects, managing stakeholder relationships, managing contractors and providing support services such as western science advice and information management.

Enquiries to: Kim Krebs,
General Manager; Phone 0407 701 808;
Email Kim.krebs@sa.gov.au

To apply and for more information visit the I WORK FOR SA website: www.iworkfor.sa.gov.au and search by vacancy number. Applications will only be accepted through I Work for SA.

The South Australian Public Sector promotes diversity and flexible ways of working including part time. Applicants are encouraged to discuss the flexible working arrangement for this role.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are strongly encouraged to apply.

Applications close:
11:30pm, Friday 23 August 2024

IWORKFOR.SA.GOV.AU

UNANSWERED QUESTIONS ONGOING

Unsatisfactorily answered questions and unilateral decision making remains an issue.
The Government must stop giving unlimited dictatorial powers to underqualified individuals.



Ratepayers to pay \$35K per annum to maintain unrequested, abandoned courts



Courts in background, situated in the cross winds of the old asbestos ridden building from Maralinga



Rubbish collected from the site should be disposed of promptly due to high wind gusts



The doors of the old building were continually left open by council until community took action

1.) Why did council cut the budget for the town's Opal Festival in half, yet continue to spend \$80,000 on a FIFO consultant that needs pizzas and promises to get attendees into meetings?

2.) How much has the Council's together group (TG) cost the ratepayers, to achieve nothing but a set of picnic benches in the playground? What the community is asking here is, "What is the **true cost** to the Ratepayers annually for the engagement of facilitator? Inclusive of salary, travel expenses, accommodation, use of vehicle, pizzas, other costs that might not be included in the published amount of \$80K?

3.) How much did it cost the ratepayers when council closed its offices for arguably more than one day, and went for a jolly to Adelaide to meet with the Governor General? Just to clarify, we are talking about the payments for the facilitator's time, and the wages for those who did no work for the absentee period.

Interesting that Groups can visit Gov House anytime, with a permanent invitation for Groups to visit Government House on the Governor's own Website, <https://www.governor.sa.gov.au/office-of-the-governor/vice-regal-guidelines>

4.) Why is the Local Government Minister's attendance at Coober Pedy, on the facilitators list to follow up from Adelaide visit? The trip to Adelaide did not secure or prompt Minister Joe Szacach to visit Coober Pedy. We have been aware for some months that Minister Joe Szacach would be in Coober Pedy in late July. Minister Szacach is well aware of his obligations and commitments, therefore I find that entry inappropriate and misleading.

5.) When and who attended the public consultation on the latest rate increases and water / electricity hikes? The Administrator's response was completely dismissive of the ratepayer/community questions. Fait Accompli ?

6.) Why did council not adopt any queries on public submissions re Annual Budget Review. The administrators totally dismissed ratepayers concerns?

7.) a. Why did the council approve the refurbishment of the old Basketball courts with no public consultation or even a public notice? Does the council realise that the courts are within meters of a building riddled with asbestos, and toxic pigeon excrement?

7.) b. • **if an amendment to a CLMP has impact on the interests of the community a council must conduct public consultation regarding the amendment.**9

Was a public notice published alerting the community to the BHP interest in our Community Land? If so, where was it placed? **Otherwise, without any notice or consultation the administrators appear to have decided that that the community would not be impacted. This action appears dismissive and disrespectful for the host community.**

Please produce the process used for this decision.

Page 13

Questions for Administrator:
from Friday 26 July 2024

RATEPAYERS FEEL SKINNED ALIVE WITH COUNCIL FORCING A BAILOUT PAYMENT FROM THEM

PART 1: Too many complaints to publish!

As residents open up their new financial year rates notices, some are finding themselves paying \$1,000 extra for living on the outskirts of a remote town on a dirt road, as desperate council bureaucrats tax the community severely in a struggle to produce an end of financial year result.

A family living well outside the CBD is now paying over \$800 per quarter, (\$3.5K annually), as now living in a town where administrators, in our view, have been, left to their own devices and unable to prioritise their spending.````

Rates on a \$2M home in Adelaide is under \$3,000 per year. Residents who believe they are living inside a horror story have taken to blogging their uninhabited disgust across the world wide web.

Sad but true, our low income families are feeling exploited, as we are all FORCED to bail out the council (no genuine consultation) and by a type of garnishee deduction included on their rates notices via dubious fees / increases.

Wait till we receive council's new Electricity and Water charges! And wait for next year's increases when ratepayers are forced to pay for the maintenance of a bygone era! Adequately and respectfully replaced to support ALL of Coober Pedy's youth, years ago!

Q: Where is the oversight for this ongoing, sad parade of would be administrators, collecting top money from the public purse but continually failing to deliver appropriate remote area services?

Collaboratively submitted by local Stakeholders.

AS OF 8th or 9th AUGUST, NO ANSWERS TO PUBLISHED COMMUNITY QUESTIONS HAVE BEEN RECEIVED

Letter: OFF LIMIT RULES FOR ADMINISTRATORS NEEDED

Dear Editor,

It is disturbing that council personalities have offered the abandoned basketball courts near the derelict community hall to a nearby mining company to achieve a 'social licence', committing the ratepayers to new 20 year debt.

The basketball courts are a by product of the 70's, no longer needed or used. Even the newer models are of little interest in this day and age.

Shame on the council for neglecting to clear that area many moons ago to make way for the town's changing needs.

Why are those appointed to restore financial functionality behaving like drunken sailors with our affairs when the town is still recovering from a previous mining company's meddling in our community structure with serious ability to impact our personal and community financial positions.

We should have been consulted!

Q: How can we roll this poor decision back?

Being given the title administrator does not make someone an overnight genius or an oracle. The state government MUST set boundaries for temporary administrators and place certain functions off limits. After 5 years there is no progress with whimsical and non transparent dealings impacting on the original debt and now into our personal incomes

Local Stakeholders (supplied)

Coober Pedy Regional Times

Friday 9 August 2024

POTENTIAL FOR CORRUPTION & IMPROPER CONDUCT in Facilities Maintenance in Local Government

ICAC Commissioner's foreword

Pursuant to section 42 of the Independent Commissioner Against Corruption Act 2012, I present this report entitled 'Facilities Maintenance in Local Government'.

Section 42(3) of the Independent Commissioner Against Corruption Act 2012 requires that the President of the Legislative Council and the Speaker of the House of Assembly lay the report before their respective Houses on the first sitting day after the passage of 28 days (or such shorter number of days as the Attorney-General approves) after receiving this report.

The report has been prepared to inform public officers working in local government about corruption prevention issues revealed by several corruption investigations conducted by my officers.

Recently, we finalised an investigation into the conduct of a public officer working in facilities maintenance at a local council. The investigation involved allegations the public officer improperly used his position to award council maintenance contracts to individuals and businesses with whom he had longstanding connections. Those connections were not disclosed to the council.

The investigation uncovered a pattern of improper conduct. However, poor record keeping and a lack of admissible evidence meant it was doubtful a charge of corruption would be sustained.

This is not the first time the ICAC has seen conduct of this type in the award of facilities maintenance contracts in councils.

Procurement in general is a high corruption risk activity. Procurement as it relates to facilities management has some unique features that can make it more susceptible to corruption.

I believe it is in the public interest to set out some general observations arising from these investigations. I hope this will prompt councils and public officers working in facilities management to assess the corruption risks in their systems and practices, and to strengthen relevant controls.

The Hon. Ann Vanstone QC

"Independent Commissioner Against Corruption

Observations from investigations

Investigations undertaken by the ICAC suggest that improper conduct by public officers and suppliers, and failures in practices, policies and procedures, are at the core of corruption risks in facilities management.

Observations from ICAC investigations can provide all councils with the opportunity to identify 'red flags' in the way they procure and manage facilities maintenance goods and services contracts.

ICAC investigations have revealed the following improper conduct by council officers working in facilities management procurement:

- ◆ seeking inducements as a reward for awarding contracts.
- ◆ providing confidential information to potential suppliers about upcoming contracts.
- ◆ seeking quotes from unqualified suppliers with the aim of favouring other suppliers.
- ◆ awarding contracts to a company in which the procuring officer has an interest.
- ◆ providing tight time frames to submit quotes in order to favour a related business.
- ◆ engaging suppliers under expired general building service contracts.
- ◆ inflating procurement valuation scores of a company in which the procurement officer has an undisclosed interest.
- ◆ procurement decision maker writing a supplier's submission.
- ◆ manipulating supplier quotations to ensure work is shared among suppliers with whom the procurement officer has a personal association

Investigations have revealed evidence of the following improper conduct by suppliers:

- ◆ colluding to set prices for maintenance work.
- ◆ seeking confidential information from council.
- ◆ overcharging for facilities maintenance work.
- ◆ under delivering against agreed requirements and standards of work.
- ◆ undertaking unnecessary inspection, testing, cleaning and maintenance of facilities

Investigations have uncovered the following poor practices in councils:

- ◆ inconsistency in procurement procedures and misuse of purchase orders.
- ◆ failure to enforce a policy to declare conflicts of interest.
- ◆ poor procurement induction and training.
- ◆ inconsistent application of market approach requirements and financial delegations.
- ◆ poor control of access to confidential tender and contract documents.
- ◆ failure to update equipment and facilities registers.
- ◆ inadequate measures to gauge whether work has been completed to appropriate standards.
- ◆ raising of purchase orders after work is complete.
- ◆ awarding work to unqualified or unlicensed contractors.
- ◆ a lack of segregation of roles and accountabilities in procurement processes.
- ◆ awarding contracts to public officers employed by the council, or their relatives, where the public officers are in positions that give rise to conflicts of interest

Corruption risk factors in facilities maintenance in local councils

The same risks involved in standard procurement processes are present in facilities management procurement. However, facilities management involves additional risks that make corruption prevention challenging.

Dispersal of council facilities

Council assets and facilities are often dispersed over large geographical areas, particularly in regional and rural councils. This can make supervision of the state of facilities and the quality of maintenance services challenging. However, it is important that councils understand what work is legitimately required and ensure that any work carried out is to the appropriate standard.

'Slippery' assets and procurement ambiguity

The 'slipperiness' of assets, or the difficulty of collecting and maintaining accurate information about the condition and maintenance costs of facilities, can lead to substandard procurement processes. A lack of visibility of facilities can lead to an over reliance on subjective measures to ascertain the quality of facilities, their need for maintenance, and the quality and value for money of services provided. Irregularities can appear in procurement processes if these challenges are poorly managed.

Continuous procurements

Maintenance of council facilities and assets is often managed by contractors engaged under ongoing procurement contracts or cyclical procurements (as opposed to a standalone contract for capital or infrastructure work). The use of open-ended purchase orders, open or rolling contracts, existing legacy contracts and 'set and forget' estimated budgets, heightens the risk of corruption. Procurements of this type can lead to mismanagement of contingency budgets and repeated use of contract variations.

A marked corruption risk of continuous procurements is that they allow longstanding relationships to develop between staff and contractors, which can lead to a decline in supervision over time. Lapses in supervision can also occur when long running contracts are managed by a succession of employees.

Mix of reactive versus planned work

The management and maintenance of facilities and assets is either planned and cyclical or reactive. When reactive work predominates, facilities management practices tend to lack strategy, become crisis-focused, incur unanticipated costs, and to be short on supervision and budget control.

One investigation revealed that a council's facilities maintenance work was roughly 65% reactive. The council spent considerable time responding to urgent service requests. Such business environments quickly become chaotic, with processes and controls bypassed through urgency. Deterioration makes facilities maintenance vulnerable to those seeking improper advantage.

Market condition of suppliers

Some industries involved in facilities maintenance, such as cleaning and landscaping, have low barriers to market entry. The lack of regulation in many small businesses can attract unscrupulous operators, as well as public officers who might seek to collude with them. Small businesses might prefer to tender for multiple small contracts that lack the probity controls applying to larger contracts. Some may seek to avoid formal contractual relations entirely. Small and unsophisticated businesses tend to provide invoicing and documentation of inferior quality, negatively affecting transparency in their engagement. Markets in facilities maintenance can be highly competitive, where suppliers can be motivated to underquote to 'get their foot in the door', only later to vary contract prices and conditions.

High volume, low value procurement

Investigations have established that procurements of high volumes of low value goods and services are open to abuse. These procurements are common in council facilities maintenance work. Low value goods and services tend to be purchased with less stringent checks and controls, and lower financial delegations. Small purchases can remain out of sight of council management and illegitimate expenditure can escalate quickly.

Knowledge imbalances between suppliers and councils

Some councils lack resources and capabilities in facilities maintenance. By contrast, maintenance contractors, whether a small business or a sophisticated company, will usually be experts in their field. This can result in significant knowledge imbalances between suppliers and council officers. Information asymmetry can be a factor in the exploitation of procurement processes, with suppliers manipulating technical knowledge, and council staff finding themselves ill equipped to detect excessive scoping, servicing or charging, and under delivery.

Segregation versus integration

Situations in which a public officer has too much power and discretion over a business function can drive corruption. This would ordinarily be controlled by segregating parts of the function to ensure that no single person has exclusive control over decisions or processes.

By contrast, in facilities management key corruption risks arise from a lack of overarching visibility of facility conditions, costs, maintenance needs, choice of suppliers, and verification of suppliers' work. Enhancing lines of sight between the phases of the activity is sometimes appropriate to minimise corruption. Far from a failure to segregate creating risks, a lack of integration might pose the principal corruption risk in facilities management.

Continued next page

From previous
page

POTENTIAL FOR CORRUPTION & IMPROPER CONDUCT in Facilities Maintenance in Local Government

Conflicts of interest

All ICAC corruption investigations into council facilities management have revealed undisclosed conflicts of interest. Conflicts of interest in procurement are a persistent integrity risk. However, in facilities management that risk is more complex than in other business areas, and requires more attention from councils.

Council facilities management officers will often have work histories in general facilities maintenance or allied industries such as cleaning, painting, plumbing, electrical, testing and inspections, building operations, construction, security and safety, landscape and gardening. The number of disciplines involved will naturally give rise to diverse associations and will increase the risk of conflicts of interest. Councils must proactively manage the possibility that some individuals may seek advantage, or favour certain associates. Policies and education about declaring and managing conflicts will mitigate some of these risks.

Regional and rural local councils should be particularly aware of their heightened conflict of interest risk.

As noted in the evaluation of the City of Playford:

This is perhaps of even greater importance for councils where employees often live and work in the local area and may be known to suppliers competing for work. An effective policy framework should provide clarity around staff responsibilities for the management of procurement processes including for the declaration of conflicts, personal interests and outside employment.

It should also provide clear guidance as to the effective management of those conflicts for staff with the ability to influence or decide upon procurement activities.¹¹

SA ICAC Evaluation of the City of Playford p. 78.
<https://www.icac.sa.gov.au/publications/published-reports/evaluation-of-city-of-playford>

The ICAC has released a guidance paper on the obligations on all public officers to identify, disclose and manage their conflicts of interest. There is also an ICAC “conflicts of interest online course, available on the ICAC website.

External recruitment agencies

Recruitment is a business function particularly vulnerable to corruption. Additional risks are introduced when external recruitment agencies are engaged. In those circumstances councils will generally have less control over the vetting and integrity screening of candidates.

Reasons for using an external recruitment agency vary, but commonly the purpose is to cover staff absences, or to fill temporary positions or specific project based roles. These appointments often alleviate urgent staffing needs. However, they can result in reduced levels of screening and assessment of candidates. Lower screening standards can allow unscrupulous individuals to attain access to council operations and funds.

In one investigation, a council used a recruitment agency to hire a property maintenance officer who was later suspected of corrupt conduct. The investigation found the person was temporarily recruited to cover the extended leave of a staff member, and the recruitment occurred with some urgency. Thorough screening was lacking. It turned out that a simple Google search would have revealed the clouded work history of the individual.

Employee induction

Another risk associated with the use of recruitment agencies is that induction processes can be lacking or absent. One investigation revealed that induction processes, which the recruitment agency was contractually required to provide, did not occur. Failure to instruct an employee on the council’s procurement procedures and conflict of interest policies potentially facilitated that employee’s improper conduct.

Induction is important. Councils can reduce the risk of corrupt conduct by making staff aware of the ethical expectations, processes and procedures relevant to their role. Detailing the consequences of wrongdoing can reduce those risks. Staff who understand the integrity risks of their workplaces are better positioned to detect breaches.

Work backlogs and staff turnover

The need to recruit temporary staff to backfill positions can be an indication of workplace volatility. High staff turnover can be both the consequence and the cause of high workloads or backlogs. Councils that operate without adequate staffing levels or competencies are more susceptible to corruption. Busy work environments feature reduced levels of supervision and visibility of staff activities, as well as pressure to circumvent processes or find ‘workarounds’ to complete tasks and respond quickly to urgent work requests. This may be more challenging in facilities management because of the distinct procurement integrity risks that pertain.

Corruption mitigation

Eliminating the risk of corruption in facilities management is not possible. Mitigating the risk is.

Section 49 of the Local Government Act 1999 provides local government with principles to guide procurement activities.

The section requires local councils to develop and maintain policies, practices and procedures directed towards obtaining value in the expenditure of public money, providing for ethical and fair treatment of participants, and ensuring probity, accountability and transparency in procurement operations.

Corruption is enabled by poor practices, policies and procedures. Improving the governance of facilities management will strengthen resilience to corruption. The following are broad principles to guide councils in their review of facilities management governance:

- ◆ improve visibility and knowledge about the range, dispersal, condition and requirements of council facilities
- ◆ set maintenance regimes to tighten scopes of work, control budgets, and reduce reactive workloads
- ◆ conduct market research prior to scoping work to protect against knowledge imbalance.
- ◆ undertake due diligence before appointing a supplier
- ◆ avoid open-ended, rolling, or ‘set and forget’ contracts, and monitor and manage contract variations and contingency budgets.
- ◆ aggregate low value, high volume maintenance work into strategic, longer term contracts.
- ◆ incentivise proper supplier behaviour through well designed contracts with appropriate and balanced performance indicators and/or penalties.
- ◆ provide supplier training and induction to indicate expected conduct and performance, and provide work plans.
- ◆ conduct random audits to identify poor performing suppliers.
- ◆ map business processes in facilities management to find functions or staff needing integration and those requiring segregation.
- ◆ develop a strong conflict of interest identification and management regime, regularly reminding council officers of their obligations in this regard.
- ◆ ensure external recruitment agencies undertake employment and integrity screening practices that are commensurate with council’s own screening expectations and standards.
- ◆ ensure council officers—especially those appointed via external recruitment agencies—are properly inducted into procurement policies and procedures, including awareness of the consequences of misconduct.
- ◆ monitor workloads in facilities management to guard against the development of pressured environments favourable to corruption

Conclusion

Corruption risks in council facilities management are present in the administration of councils, the conduct of individual public officers and that of suppliers seeking to benefit their businesses.

Understanding the risks and ensuring that appropriate governance structures are in place is vital if councils are to protect themselves from corruption. In light of this report, all councils should review their practices, policies and procedures on facilities management procurement and contract management. Councils may benefit from having their audit and risk teams conduct random audits of facilities management functions to detect weaknesses.

REPRINTED FROM
Friday 10 September 2021
Always relevant

WEDNESDAY
CFS TRAINING

Training 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month at 7.00pm.

ALL enquiries to Cpt Matt Corner on 0458 396 305

MINE RESCUE/SES

1st Wednesday of the month 7.30pm, and 2nd & 4th Saturday of the month 9am.

Unit Manager Contact detail is 0427 725 446.

THURSDAYS
CP SHOOTERS CLUB

See back page for latest updates


FRIDAYS

Greek Charcoal BBQ every Friday at the Greek Hall.

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

Meets Fridays 7pm at the side of the Catholic Church

If you have a drinking problem and need help. Call 1800222222, Or call Dave on 0409349753

SATURDAYS

Saturday 21 September at 11 am Unveiling of Memorial at site 65km east along the William Creek road. Details to come.

PARKRUN

8am Saturday mornings Town Oval

GOLF 8 30am
MINE RESCUE/SES

2nd & 4th Saturday of the month 9am Duty officer ph no: is 0427 752 446

CP SHOOTERS CLUB

See BACK page for latest updates, or Ring John DiDonna on 0427 649 389

CROATION CLUB

Happy Hour 6-7pm

SUNDAYS

Catacomb Anglican Church; Catacomb Road Coober Pedy

Ph: 86725038. Open 8 am to 6 pm each day

Sunday services at 9:30 am, dinner and Bible study at 6 pm (Rectory) – bring a plate to share

CP SHOOTERS CLUB

See BACK PAGE for latest updates Ring John DiDonna on 0427649389

COOBER PEDY RSL

Open Sunday afternoon from 4.00pm, Happy hour and members draw between 5.00pm and 6.00pm

COOBER PEDY - QUICK FACTS



Coober Pedy is a Cosmopolitan, Underground Opal Mining Town, built on the back of Precious Opal.

Located on the Stuart Hwy in Outback South Australia, with a population of 1,566 and over 45 nationalities, Elevation: 226 metres (774 feet) above sea level; postcode: 5723. Time Zone: Australian Central Standard Time (UTC +9:30). Subject to summer time/daylight savings between October and March annually

Main Industry - OPAL – Coober Pedy is known as the Opal Capital of the World; Opal being Australia's National Gem. Coober Pedy has 70 Opal Fields.

Coober Pedy is also renowned for its underground living. Dwellings called dugouts, were built by early opal miners to escape the intense summer heat, and the cold desert winters. Tourist flock to the Opal Capital from autumn through to early summer and experience the historic existence of over a century of opal mining and underground living.

To Visit Coober Pedy - The town can be accessed by car, coach and air-flights from Adelaide; also train from Adelaide, on the Ghan line. The Manguri siding is 47km from town and transportation into Coober Pedy would need to be arranged.

Distances by Road from Coober Pedy to: Alice Springs: 687.3 km 6 hr 58 min; Darwin: 2,183.2 km 22 hr 16 min; Port Augusta: 540.2 km 5 hr 31 min; Adelaide: 848.2 km 9 hr 2 min; Melbourne: 1,573.7 km 17 hr 9 min; Perth: 2,492.7 km 28 hr.



Coober Pedy Regional Times ©



AOC AUSTRALIAN OPAL TOUR 2024

Experience of a lifetime • 25 September - 4 October 2024

See link for Itinerary

<https://www.facebook.com/cooberpedyregionaltimes/posts/pfbid047D1eDFaaLVsJjRSVeqKqYW14uZfnw6VTqPNQWwjreZkpXarb8ygnpX4PbZF7ZYI>

Corrections employment program expands to the regions

A program teaching prisoners job-ready skills and helping them find work post-release is expanding to more regional prisons, with a stronger focus on Aboriginal employment.

Work Ready, Release Ready delivers education and hands-on training to participants, paving the way for them to enter the workforce after they exit custody – and reduce their risk of reoffending.

The program will be rolled out at Mount Gambier and Port Lincoln prisons and increase from 500 participants to 800 under the expansion.

Prisons already running the program – delivered in partnership with employment services provider, Workskil Australia – include Mobilong Prison, Cadell Training Centre, Port Augusta Prison, Yatala Labour Prison, Adelaide Women's Prison and the Adelaide Pre-release Centre.

Launched in 2018, nearly 1,800 participants have enrolled in the voluntary program with more than half of graduates going on to find meaningful employment.

The State Government has committed an additional \$6.3 million to build on the program's success and provide more support for Aboriginal participants, including increasing the proportion of this group to 40 per cent of total participants by:

- Broadening eligibility criteria to the program for Aboriginal people
- Increasing intensity and duration of the program when required
- Boosting the number of Aboriginal staff working in the program
- Improved engagement with Aboriginal Controlled Community Organisations
- Developing specific, targeted training strategy for Aboriginal participants.

A Five Stream Industrial Model has also been developed to help participants secure a career in highly sought-after roles – covering construction and mining, manufacturing, customer service, transport facilities, and logistics.

Since being established Work Ready, Release Ready has played a key role in the government achieving its target of reducing reoffending by 10 per cent by 2020, and this expansion will help meet the new reduction target of 20 per cent by 2026.

Minister for Correctional Services Dan Cregan said, *This program has a track record of increasing employment and reducing reoffending for those who want to be involved.*

From job interview training to helping participants obtain licences, it's about providing a clear pathway to meaningful work beyond the prison gates.

Expanding the initiative to more regions will lead to better outcomes for hundreds of additional participants across the state.

Workskil Australia Ltd CEO Nicole Dwyer said, *Stable employment is crucial for reducing the likelihood of reoffending, and ongoing success post-prison.*

Throughout our delivery of Work Ready, Release Ready we've seen real examples of the positive impact on participants, their families and the businesses that employ them.

We're proud of the success of the program so far and looking forward to enabling meaningful change for more participants in new regions under the expansion.

Legal System

Coober Pedy Magistrate Court

Malliotis Blvd. Coober Pedy (08) 8672 5601



Coober Pedy Sitting dates in AUGUST
Monday 26 Aug
Tuesday 27 Aug
Wednesday 28 Aug
Thursday 29 Aug
Friday 30 Aug

<https://www.courts.sa.gov.au/case-lists/coober-pedy-caselist/>

<https://www.courts.sa.gov.au/case-lists/roxby-downs-caselist/>



Kids Helpline launches Australia's largest anti-bullying classroom session.

Kids Helpline @ School's Bullying – it stops with you session: will take place on Friday 16 August as a virtual live-stream session across the nation focussing on supporting high school students.

"Our upcoming virtual event is our most ambitious yet, with Kids Helpline @ School seeking to unite high schools across Australia on the same day as one big national classroom on Friday 16th August. This free event is being held next week during Bullying No Way Week, the 45-minute session is based off Kids Helpline @ School's popular 'Bullying: It ends with us' topic.

Virtual Event details:

When: 2-2.45PM* (AEST) 16 August 2024 *QLD: 2pm | NSW: 2pm | VIC: 2pm | ACT: 2pm | NT: 1.30pm | SA: 1.30PM | WA: 12pm

Where: Vimeo live-stream it in your own classroom!

Who: suitable for all high school grades

Cost: it is free

Can't make it on the day? A recording and exclusive resources will be made available to all registrants following the live session!

<https://schools.kidshelpline.com.au/schools/home/sessions/high-school/anti-bullying-event>

CONTACT	Whyalla 8645 4255	
Port Pirie 86331744	Kadina 88214366	
ROWAN RAMSEY MP FEDERAL MEMBER FOR GREY SERVING THE PEOPLE OF COOBER PEDY rowan.ramsey.mp@aph.gov.au		



Lee Mott
Therapeutic Counsellor
By Appointment Only
7 Day flexibility
Phone, Zoom, F2F
M: 0483 004466
E: lee@counsellingcompanion.com.au
W: www.counsellingcompanion.com.au





Coober Pedy Country Fire Service
Station open Wednesday nights from 1800. (6pm)
with training from 18.30. (6.30pm)

For more information contact
Jeremy at
Jeremy.lambert@sacfs.volunteer.org.au

Or Coordinator, Raylene Hagel 040 808 9725.
In an Emergency dial 000

Updated Local Service Provider Listings

C.P. Police Station

Malliotis Blvd. Coober Pedy
(08) 8672 5056; Assistance 131 444;
Emergency 000; Crime Stoppers 1800 555 677

Coober Pedy Hospital

Lot 89 Hospital Rd
Open 24 hours · (08) 8672 5009

Coober Pedy Medical Practice

Lot 89 McDougal Road
(08) 8678 9224

iCCnet SA (Remote Health Monitoring)

Level 1, Administration Building
1 Tonsley Boulevard, Tonsley SA 5042, Australia
Tel 7117 0600 (9am to 8pm seven days a week)
Email: HEALTHFMCiCCnetSA@sa.gov.au

Coober Pedy Area School

17/18 Paxton Rd. Coober Pedy
(08) 8672 5077

Umoona Tjutagku Health Service

Lot 8 Umoona Rd
(08) 8672 5255

Housing SA

Lot 334 Hutchison St (Opposite Bank)
PHONE: 131 299

Centrelink

LOT 715 Hutchison St. Coober Pedy
13 24 68

District Council of Coober Pedy

LOT 773 Hutchison St. Coober Pedy
(08) 8672 4600

Coober Pedy Tourist Information Cen.

LOT 773 Hutchison St
(08) 8672 4600

Umoona Community Council Inc

Umoona Rd
(08) 8672 5246

MAP/Sobering Up Centre. Ph: 86723903

MAP BUS Tues to Sat. 4pm-12am.
Sobering Up Centre Tues - Sat 4pm - 8am

Umoona Tjiti Tjapu Tjuta Childcare Centre

Lot 315 Robins Blvd
(08) 8672 5644

Umoona Aged Care

Lot 89 Hospital Rd
(08) 8672 5605

National Indigenous Australians Ag. (NIAA)

17/18 Paxton Rd. Coober Pedy
(08) 8672 5077

Far North Health Advisory Council

C/- Coober Pedy Hospital
(08) 8672 5009

C.P. Community Correctional Centre:

Malliotis Blvd. Coober Pedy
(08) 8672 3091

Uniting Country SA

Paxton Rd
1300 067 777

TAFE SA

Adult education school
Hutchison St. Coober Pedy
(08) 8678 9000

Coober Pedy Magistrates Court

Malliotis Blvd. Coober Pedy
(08) 8672 5601

Child Abuse Report Line (CARL)

131478

Aboriginal Family Support Services

Lot 1991 Aylett Street, Coober Pedy
(08) 8672 3066

Coober Pedy Retail, Business and Tourism Association Inc

Coober Pedy SA 3723

Committee Elected for 2024

President: George Kountouris

Vice President: George Russell OAM

Treasurer: Nick Brellas

Secretary/Public Officer: Nicky Kountouris

Committee Members:

Irene Spillmann

Daniel Tsharke

Sean Harrison

Contact: chair@cooberpedy.com

<https://www.cooberpedy.com/contact-2/>

Coober Pedy Sports and Recreation Association Inc

Dilusha Fernando - Chairperson

Jacqui Boland - Treasurer

Gwen Martin - Secretary

Jon Fatt-Clifton - Committee member

Paul Maduro - Committee member

Email: cpsportsandrecreation@gmail.com

COOBER PEDY, SA 5723

Committee Elected for 2024-2026

COOBER PEDY SHOOTERS CLUB Inc

COOBER PEDY, SA 5723

Committee Elected for 2023/2024“

President Daniel Lamb

“Senior Vice President Stephen Scott“

Junior Vice President Nil“

Secretary John Di Donna“

Treasurer Suzanne Bunker“

Public Relations Daniel Lamb“

PR /MPIO Officer Tabetha Wilkes“

F/Arms Instructor Chris Warrior“

F/Arms Instructor John Di Donna“

F/Arms Instructor Dale Price“

F/Arms Instructor James Michie“

Licensee/Armourer Chris Warrior“

Licensee/Armourer Daniel Lamb

Contact Secretary: 0427 649 389

Coober Pedy RSL (Sub branch)

President: Raylene Hagel

Mick Cox: Vice President

Treasurer: Miriam Kammermann

Secretary: Peta Burnett

Kingsley Kammermann

Matt Cormer

Ronda Michell

Malcolm Michell

Rosslyn Jazepczyk

Julie Knight-Eastwood

Coober Pedy RSL, Edward Street

COOBER PEDY SA 5723

(08) 8672 5477

Coober Pedy Historical Society Inc

Committee 2024

Chairperson: Yuko Castles

Secretary: Jenny Davison

Treasurer: Sue Britt

Janet Walton

Edi Brandli

Contact: cooberpedyhs@gmail.com

Coober Pedy GEM TRADE SHOW Association Inc

Committee 2024

TBA

COOBER PEDY MINERS ASSOCIATION INC

Coober Pedy SA 3723

Committee Elected for 2024

President: Matt Graham,

Secretary: Monique Harding

Treasurer: John Olsson,

Committee Members:

Rod Wells,

Mish Blanusa,

Dean Kennelly, Sebastian Crisa,

Mike Eakins, Steve Perkins,

Lachlan Blanchford,

Shannon Blanchford

Bailey Stevens

Coober Pedy Opal Fields Golf Club Inc.

Coober Pedy SA 3723

Committee Elected for 2024

Club Captain: Stephen Borrett

President: Chevahn Hoad

Secretary: Nadine Lewis

Treasurer: Father Paul Crotty

Grounds Keeper: Dylan Lewis

Bar Manager: Stephen Borrett

Committee Members:

Chloe Lewis,

Miro Markovic

Contact: cooberpedygolfclub@gmail.com

Coober Pedy Area School Governing Council

Members

Maurice Saah (Principal) - Ex-Officio Member

Elected Staff Representative

Veronika Witham

Elected Parent Members

Lisa McClure

Chantelle Bamford- Secretary

Sabrina Troisi- Treasurer

Lyn Boussios

Ariane Montminy-Roberge- Chairperson

Lia Pantelis

Yuko Castles

Marzena Mazurkiewicz

Sarah Rethus

Donna Clements

Elected Community Members

Amber McDonald

Maria Brellas

We are currently waiting on our representatives from the Umoona Community and the District Council of Coober Pedy

Outback Open Air Cinema Inc (Coober Pedy Drive In Theatre)

Coober Pedy SA 3723

Committee 2023 -2024

Chantelle Bamford Chairperson

Rebecca Nicolle Deputy chair

Tanya Lauder Secretary/Treasurer

Lyndal Price - Committee member

Gemma Hoad - Committee member

Kaysy Clet de Leon-Committee member

Bethany Aylett- Committee member

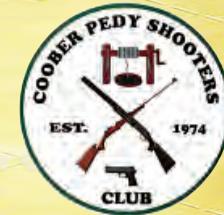
<http://www.cooberpedydrivein.org.au/>

DUSTY RADIO INC

Coober Pedy SA 3723

Coober Pedy Shooter's Club

Established 1974



Coober Pedy Shooter Club welcomes all new members, visitors and Sponsors

If you don't have a firearm, come along & our members will assist you with all enquiries.

Minimum age for shooting at the club is 10 yrs (Rifles and Air Pistol)
 & 10 yrs (Pistols).

**Starting Times 9:00
 AM**
**Saturday — Pistols
 (IPSC)**

17 August
24 August
31 August
7 September
14 Sepember

DISCIPLINES INCLUDE:

- ◆ Air Rifle/
 pistol
- ◆ IPSC
- ◆ ISSF
- ◆ Rifle Metalic
 Silhouette
- ◆ Combine
 Service
- ◆ Black
 Powder
- ◆ Service pistol
- ◆ Shotgun
- ◆ Steel
 Challenge

**Coober Pedy
 Shooter's
 Club supports:**
 • Darts
 • Archery

**Starting Time: 10:00
 AM**
**Sundays .22 Rimfire
 100m Benchrest**

18 August
25 August
1 September
8 Sepetmber
15 September

FINAL REMINDER MEMBERSHIP Renewal Now Due 2024



Single Membership \$ 100.00

Couple Membership \$150.00

Family Membership \$ 200.00

Affiliate Membership \$20.00

SSAA MEMBERSHIP DUE NOW

Sign-up online

<https://ssaasa.org.au....> Or at the club



Any Enquires regarding Membership, sponsorships, donations, or shooting, please contact

Suzanne Bunker - - Email cpsc.treasurer@gmail.com

John Di Donna - Mobile 0427 649 389 - Email. jdidonna@dodo.com.au