

COOPER PEDY WILL HONOUR AND RECOGNISE THEIR 1980s PROGRESS ASSOCIATION WHO ESTABLISHED WATER SECURITY IN THE TOWN



CPPMA members 1982- 1986.(Not in order, and some not present) Neville Hyatt, John Thrower, Eric Malliotis, Ralph Adamo, Peter Bruhns, Sieglinde Bruhns, Peter Chrisakis, Geoff Ferguson, George Fioros, Arthur Gouletsas, Steve Marjanovic, Frank Pennisi, Boro Rapaic, John Smith

The Cooper Pedy Community Alliance believe that the 1980s Miners & Progress Association deserve a dedicated plaque to remind future people coming to the town, just who's shoulders they are standing on. In 1984, there was NO local council. The town was represented solely by the Cooper Pedy Progress and Miners Assoc.

The CPPMA lobbied for and organised the building and installation of a suitable and reliable Reverse Osmosis (RO) Plant, including loans and grants. This plant was completed in 1985, two years before the District Council was established in 1987.

Last week the current State Government announced that responsibility for water treatment and delivery in Cooper Pedy would be transferred from the District Council to SA Water by the end of the year, with the change intended to improve reliability and reduce costs for residents.

The Government stated that the ageing infrastructure, largely built in the 1970s and 1980s, required upgrades and that SA Water's involvement will allow investment in repairs, reduced water loss and a more efficient and sustainable supply system, with pricing expected to move closer to statewide levels once arrangements were finalised.

The lengthy release highlighted the Government's role in establishing a taskforce [August 2022] to address local service challenges but now links the transfer to broader efforts to end the council's long period under administration. In short, the government has failed to meet the needs of this historic opal mining town on matters as serious as essential services.

Current Ministers and one FIFO administration identity described the change as a step toward improved essential services, long term stability and more affordable water for the Cooper Pedy community.

Obviously by the timing, the community in general took the announcement as an election ploy, and we are still wondering, considering the time it has taken the state government appointees to achieve nothing – now into their 8th year. The community has concluded that it doesn't have enough information or trust.

To the Premier of South Australia, the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, the Minister for Local Government, and the Board of SA Water,

The Cooper Pedy Community Alliance writes on behalf of concerned residents and ratepayers regarding the recent announcement that management of Cooper Pedy's water treatment and delivery will be transferred to SA Water by the end of 2026

While the announcement promises improved services and lower prices immediately before a state election, no detailed consultation with residents has occurred, no implementation framework has been released, and no clear explanation has been provided outlining how this transfer will affect existing customers, infrastructure ownership, pricing structures, or long-term service obligations.

Given the essential nature of water supply in our remote environment, this absence of detail is deeply concerning. We respectfully seek written clarification on several matters directly relevant to residents.

Are you proposing that Cooper Pedy customers be automatically transitioned without being treated as new service applicants, and can the Government guarantee that no resident will be charged a reconnection fee, meter installation fee, establishment fee, or similar charge as part of this transfer?

Are you proposing that residents be required to enter into new retail agreements with SA Water, and if so, what terms and conditions would apply?

Are you proposing that pricing immediately move to statewide regulated tariffs, and will those tariffs be subject to ESCOSA oversight from the date of transfer?

Are you proposing that SA Water assume all existing infrastructure liabilities, including maintenance backlogs and system losses, without cost recovery measures imposed directly on residents?

Are you proposing a future requirement for mandatory sewer connection should new sewer infrastructure be developed? Can the Government confirm that they are not considering compulsory changes to existing long drop or septic systems as part of any potential transition?

ABOUT US

Coober Pedy Regional Times became a FREE Newspaper in 2006 and increased its distribution to 5,000 hard copies + and simultaneously provided a **Free Online Digital Newspaper**, to accommodate the new digital era.

Distribution covers a vast area including World Wide Web; nearby communities and towns, social media, website and mailing lists. At the end of 2025 the Social Media following alone totalled over 17,000.

The COOBER PEDY REGIONAL TIMES is 'WORLD WIDE'

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Next PUBLICATION DATE

Friday 13 March 2026

DEMOCRACY... *the prime value of journalism is that it imposes transparency, and thus accountability, on those who wield the greatest governmental and corporate power.* ~ Glenn Greenwald, Laura Poitras and Jeremy Scahill

Four pillars of Democracy are:

LEGISLATIVE : The body which makes laws for the state.

EXECUTIVE : Executes and enforces laws.

JUDICIARY : Works to protect laws.

PRESS/MEDIA : The 4th estate of democracy. It informs the public

Media releases may be submitted however there is no obligation on the newspaper to publish any part of it. Media releases are generally one sided so comments may, (or may not) be extracted and used in a related article. **CPRT does not** provide free space for political or business advertising.

Letters to Editor: Can be sent by email where possible and must be relevant to the community. Potentially defamatory comments will be edited or deleted. Letters to Editor need to be signed, but a pen name can be published.

Groups & Sponsorships: You or your group may wish to send a News Article. Aim for a 300 - 500 word story in plain text and a suitable photo/s.

If seeking an Editorial - "Advertorial" or "Special Feature", please enquire about the cost first.

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Coober Pedy

Forecast issued at 3:45 am CDT on Tuesday 3 March 2026.

[Detailed Coober Pedy Forecast](#)

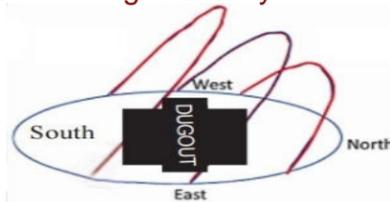
	Tue. 3 Mar	Wed. 4 Mar	Thu. 5 Mar	Fri. 6 Mar	Sat. 7 Mar	Sun. 8 Mar	Mon. 9 Mar
	 Mostly sunny.	 Mostly sunny.	 Sunny.	 Sunny.	 Sunny.	 Sunny.	 Sunny.
Max. Temperature	28 °C	30 °C	32 °C	34 °C	34 °C	34 °C	34 °C
Min. Temperature		15 °C	17 °C	19 °C	20 °C	21 °C	20 °C



Average Annual Rainfall: Approximately 144 mm to 175 mm (roughly 5.7 to 6.9 inches).

Wettest Month: February is typically the wettest month.

Driest Months: April is generally the driest, though the area experiences low, erratic rainfall throughout the year.



Autumn Equinox on March 20,
Winter Solstice on June 21,
Spring Equinox on September 23,
Summer Solstice on December 22

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LOCAL SCRIBES

MARGARET Reporter, Coober Pedy been the Editor 2005 and a contributor 1990s,



photography, advertising and the coordinating of community contributions.

Sgt Angus the Coober Station after experience on Lands, and Marla in the West Coast



Sgt Lovelock is previously from Adelaide where he began his career in policing 12 years ago.

MIKE GILLAM writer- who divides his his Art Gallery and his Dugout Mike also for the Alice



JOHN DI raised in the Australian a long-term Coober Pedy. person John is commuter



North and Flinders highways and byways, covering the entire Far North & East and Outback of South Australia.

is a freelance photographer time between in Alice Springs in Coober Pedy. writes essays Alice Springs News.

DONNA was South Outback and is resident of As a business a regular, along the Far



NOTIFICATION OF PEGGING

Opal Mining Regulations 2012
 Part 4—Mode of taking possession etc
 11—Notification of pegging

(1) The holder of a precious stones prospecting permit who has pegged out an area for a precious stones claim within (or partly within) a precious stones field must, no later than 5 pm on the working day next following the day of pegging, give notice of the pegging to the Opal Mining Registrar in a manner and form determined by the Opal Mining Registrar.

Active Claims as at 27/02/2026

Andamooka – 161
 Cooper Pedy – 435
 Mintabie – 11
 Stuart Creek – 1

SUMMER DOESN'T SLOW THE OPAL MINERS DOWN



Caldwell drill operation out on the Opal Fields at Cooper Pedy



Hand feeding mullock into the blower pipes



Left: Tunneling machine being lowered down into a mine shaft.

Centre: Freshly tumbled opal

Right: Working at night during the summer.

Thank you to Tim Kavanagh.

COOBER PEDY COMMUNITY ALLIANCE

MEETING: Saturday 28th February, 2026 at 4PM, Italian Club Chairperson's Report and feedback

1. Loss of confidence in District Council of Coober Pedy – Discussion

The entire summary below is a reflection of the community's loss of confidence in the entire council and their poor management of our town; poor communications and very poor outcomes.

2. Community deems FIFO model unsatisfactory – Discussion.

Constant complaints that FIFO is unviable and counter productive and that we need suitable people to relocate for the duration of their contract.

3. Dry-area violations continue – Discussions to include: Playground intrusions, health & safety issues, and parental concerns

Feedback included that Geoff Brock a cc on our letter to Ministers; said he had written to premier to ask for suitable Playground funding based on the plan worked out with parents of local children. Otherwise there was no real change to the security of the playground, or to the health issues there after almost 8 years of Administration.

4. Complaints - township area - "A Ghetto" – Discussion

5. Rubbish dumping around town makes it to YouTube – Discussion

Burnt out buildings, buffel grass infestations town-wide, rubbish dumping all around the outskirts of town that doesn't get picked up. Gets back to unsatisfactory council needing an action plan, and oversight that knows exactly what Coober Pedy should look like. The Historical Society announced that they needed support for the Cleanup Australia Day.

6. Water Supply issues – Discussion

Majority of members do not want their/our water supply in the hands of the State Government or SA Water. Members believe that our town needs to continue management and get back our "local" style of council and qualified, home grown talent running it efficiently and as successfully as before the revolving door CEO's and Administrators got a hold on us. The water supply has a history of making a profit and can do so again when we choose people who will commit to our town.

7. Blocked culverts around town – Discussion

The upshot of the blocked drains and culverts, is predominantly that council appears to be unclear who is responsible for culverts on DIT roads, so therefore does nothing anywhere. Council needs to ensure that the relevant infrastructure is in working condition to keep our community safe and operating effectively. Managing the buffel grass problem efficiently and according to legislation, would eradicate a large portion of the blocked drains around the town as well as removing trees growing in culverts before they become established.

8. Serious Heritage issues – Discussion

Historic assets including water infrastructure is at risk of being seized by the state government, when in fact historic research shows that three attempts over time by the state government to provide water security for our town, failed. The last attempt during the 70s left Coober Pedy families struggling for water again. It was the 70's failure that prompted the town Progress Assoc to take our future seriously and build the reliable plant that Coober Pedy has today.

9. Erosion of Community trust over heritage assets (water)

8 years of unnecessary and failed administration handballed from bewildered bureaucrat to bureaucrat where no attempt was made to secure available funding for water pipeline repairs. For 7-8 years local residents have watched their home-town disintegrate, democracy abandoned, their history disrespected, essential services not taken seriously, our assets neglected and the bureaucratic solutions, "just give them away to public servants to manage".

10. Tribute: Plaque to be dedicated to the Coober Pedy Miners and Progress Association 1982 -1987. Discussion/Vote. We will present further on this project at our next meeting.

11. Over 70s Driver's Licence Issues needs support – Discussion

The Alliance sent a letter to Ministers after complaints from this age group; Govt depts have so far acknowledged receipt of our letter with confirmation of the procedures at this current time.

12 State Election – Discussion

Coober Pedy is about to vote for a Local Member in the Seat of Stuart.

In the next two editions of CPRT, candidates for the SEAT OF STUART will answer questions sent to them by the Coober Pedy Community Alliance in conjunction with the CPRT. We urge You to consider your vote very carefully. – Discussion.

So far we have received two sets of answers which are published in this edition.

We are expecting to receive two more Questionnaire Answers for the next edition.

13. GUEST SPEAKER: The Hon Geoff Brock MP Member for Stuart



Geoff Brock MP meets with "Big Brother" after inspecting the Flat Hill Road culverts. Big Brother's property was damaged by flooding last year when blocked culverts were unable to carry water away from the Industrial area.



Geoff found a tree growing out of one of the culverts along with the inability of the culverts to transport storm water.



On the opposite side of the road, Geoff found the culvert to be completely blocked inside with no ability to process storm water.

COOBER PEDY COMMUNITY ALLIANCE MEETING SATURDAY 28th FEBRUARY 2026 - ITALIAN CLUB



Anita Kuss and Geoff Brock chat with Sue Britt, Jenny Davison, and Trish Turner from CPHS



Local residents at February's Community Alliance Meeting.



Geoff addresses residents at the Community Alliance Meeting



Residents listening carefully as Geoff Brock addresses the meeting S

We thank Geoff Brock MP for driving up here from Port Pirie to attend our Community Alliance Meeting and to speak with our residents about matters of grave concern occurring in their home-town.

Many of the issues may not affect the entire town, but they can affect a handful of individuals. Even if a bad experience only affects one person, that is still one too many.

Geoff listened to our meeting and noted the topics that were brought in for further discussion or for escalation to the ministerial level, due to the FIFO bureaucrats not being interested in the ratepayer's view on anything.

After we had reported back to the community on most of the issues raised by our ratepayers, some issues from last year, Geoff Brock addressed the meeting and then spoke one-on-one to many of the residents.



Shona and Trevor Lawrence



Where is the water pumping unit for the vans and trucks that need to use the town's bypass route?

" Even though I have visited Coober Pedy several times in the last 18 months, it was really great to catch up again and attend my first Alliance Mtg", said Geoff.

" I keep learning of new opportunities and challenges that might be happening for the community by LISTENING to the PEOPLE".

" I learned quite a bit from the Alliance Meeting, which covered several issues, and it was very beneficial for me to understand the community's views, especially on the SA Water proposal".

" There certainly needs to be far more detailed information given to the community, along with initial discussions to glean ideas and suggestions from the community as to how we can all work together for successful outcomes."

" It was great to catch up with John Di Donna from the Shooters Club again, where I was not on the Prime Minister's movement on Firearms after the Bondi incident."

" I have confirmation, after writing to the Premier regarding any proposed changes to our very strong Firearm laws in South Australia. There is no intention of changing any of our existing legislation."

" It was extremely beneficial to see the blocked drains, and from my meeting with " Bi gBrother" , I have written to the Council with my concerns for the lack of appropriate maintenance."

" I left Coober Pedy early enough to just make it over Old Peak Creek Bridge, before they closed it due to the very strong water going over the roadway. It showed me just how important it was to ensure that community culverts are maintained diligently.

I am looking forward to getting back up to Coober Pedy for the Remote Voting in a few weeks."



John Di Donna and Rob Gigos meet with Geoff Brock at the Shooters Club



Geoff handling a Black Powder pistol at the club

LEON STEPHENS: A STRONG VOICE FOR REGIONAL SOUTH AUSTRALIA

As Mayor of Port Pirie Regional Council and tireless advocate for regional SA, Liberal candidate for Stuart Leon Stephens has visited Coober Pedy yet again. He has a clear focus on practical solutions for the norther community.

“In Coober Pedy, I’ve listened to locals,” he said. “I understand the importance of growing regional economies and ensuring the future of remote towns.

“Residents need affordable water, a great school, dependable communication, and a good health system.

“Regional SA deserves strong local representation, and a government that understands the unique challenges and opportunities that exist beyond Adelaide’s suburbs.”

“Coober Pedy has a reliance on harsh groundwater, relatively fragile infrastructure, and competing demands from residents, tourism and mining,” he said.

“If elected this March, I am committed to working hard for this town.

“Remote communities rely on good roads, telecommunications and energy. The Liberal Party knows these are essential for economic growth and community wellbeing.

“A Hum State Government will fix our roads. We have committed \$1billion for road maintenance.

“There’s a huge need for improved road infrastructure. It means safer travel, and more opportunities for regional businesses through faster supply chains. That’s more jobs on the ground in Coober Pedy.

“Regional communities want a genuine voice in decision-making. I have a strong track record of working with local councils, community groups and industry to ensure policies reflect local needs and deliver real benefits on the ground.

“As a Liberal, I believe in rewarding hard work and backing small business. Regional SA has enormous potential. I will work every day to make sure it is recognised, supported and unlocked.”

Leon promises to be a strong, local voice who will work constructively and relentlessly for regional South Australia. When the regions are strong, the whole state is stronger.



Leon Stephens is a sixth-generation Port Pirie local, current Mayor, businessman, and Liberal Party candidate for the South Australian seat of Stuart.

POLICE NEWS



**Coober Pedy - 14/02/2025
til 27/02/2025**

16/02/2026 – A business on Hutchison Street was broken into overnight were a vehicle and trailer were stolen from the premises. The vehicle was located a short distance away. A male from Coober Pedy has been arrested and charged with Serious Criminal Trespass, Illegal Use of a motor vehicle, Driving Unauthorised and Failing to comply with Bail.

17/02/2026 – At about 3.50 am police located 2 males who had entered the yard of business premises on Hutchison Street and were interfering with a parked vehicle. Both males were arrested and charged with Unlawfully on Premises, Illegal interference with a motor vehicle and Breach of Bail.

25/02/2026 – Overnight a Tanaka Drill was stolen from the rear of a Utility parked on Hutchison Street. Anyone with information is asked to call Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000.

Tax Ombudsman calls for fairer interest charge relief

The ATO should urgently improve the way it offers relief from interest charges on tax debts for taxpayers trying to do the right thing, Tax Ombudsman Ruth Owen has found in her latest review.

“Interest charges (and the ATO’s increasing refusal to reduce or refund them) is contributing to growth in tax debt, increased financial stress for Australia’s struggling families and small businesses, leading to a loss in confidence in the tax system.”

In her latest report, the Tax Ombudsman highlighted inconsistent decision-making, vague guidance and poor communications were contributing to confusion and unfair outcomes.

“The ATO’s decision-making isn’t meeting community expectations. In particular, it is impacting too harshly on some taxpayers trying to do the right thing in repaying their tax debts,” Ms Owen said.

The Tax Ombudsman welcomed recent changes made by the ATO to address inconsistency in general interest charge (GIC) remission decisions and to improve its guidance to taxpayers and tax practitioners.

“Our recommendations build on the welcome recent improvements made by the ATO as well as encouraging them to test their impact after 12 months,” Ms Owen said.

The ATO has agreed to all the Tax Ombudsman’s recommendations.

Interest free payment plans: “My recommendations encourage the ATO to agree to upfront, interest-free payment plans for eligible taxpayers who enter into and maintain compliant payment plans.

The interest does not then accumulate further while taxpayers take reasonable steps to repay their debts; it helps taxpayers get back on track and discharges the tax debt more quickly for the ATO,” Ms Owen said.

Tax law requires interest to be applied and to compound daily, even while taxpayers make repayments under approved plans.

“Interest can make small debts grow to unaffordable levels very quickly and, for some taxpayers, the interest can become greater than the original debt, making full repayment near impossible.

We have seen many cases where the interest compounds to levels grossly disproportionate to the principal debt and the taxpayer’s ability to pay,” Ms Owen said.

In 2023, the ATO tightened its approach to remission and in the 24/25 financial year, the Tax Ombudsman received 134 GIC related complaints about the ATO’s approach. The report has highlighted that the change in approach was poorly communicated.

Options to challenge an ATO decision

The Tax Ombudsman found that there were additional grounds under which taxpayers could seek an informal review from the ATO that were not well understood or communicated.

“The ATO’s letters don’t always fully explain how the decision has been made to refuse a GIC remission request, or what options you have if you disagree with the decision. For many, the only formal dispute option is the Federal Court which is a costly proposition especially for those already in debt,” Ms Owen said.

During the review, the ATO extended its reconsideration criteria and will now reconsider decisions where the taxpayer believes an error has been made or when the taxpayer, or their representative, can provide additional supporting information for their application for remission.

To access the Tax Ombudsman’s full report and recommendations, visit our website: https://taxombudsman.gov.au/reviews_reports/atos-management-of-remission-of-the-general-interest-charge/

Review: ATO’s management of remission of the general interest charge.

COOBER PEDY WILL HONOUR & RECOGNISE ITS EARLY PROGRESS ASSOC FOR ESTABLISHING WATER SECURITY IN THE TOWN

Beyond these operational questions lies an issue of profound local importance. The Coober Pedy desalination plant was completed in an 18 month timeframe during 1984 and 1985, before Council control, and was a direct initiative of the community itself during a period of determined local progress and self-reliance.

Later, and to meet growing demands an extension to the desalination plant was commissioned and installed 2001, namely RO2.

The main issue with Coober Pedy's water supply is the underground Network of pipes feeding the town. Due to poor management between 2018 and 2026, unnecessary high pressure has damaged the underground pipes and needs urgent attention. After Water Manager Colin Pitman exited the position, the Underground Network Plans have also been missing.

In May 2015 the original Pre-treatment plant (RO1) was upgraded and set to process a further 6.5 Billion ltrs of water.

This Desalination Plant success by our opal miners followed decades of failed attempts by the Government to provide reliable water security for Coober Pedy. It therefore stands as a symbol of community resilience, ingenuity, and independence in one of Australia's harshest environments.

Many residents do not wish to see our asset transferred into state ownership without transparent consultation, heritage consideration, and a clear understanding and agreement of ownership, control, and decision-making authority going forward.

It is well recorded publicly that the severe damage to the underground pipeline was sustained during the first few years of Government managed Administration at Coober Pedy, where successive public servants saw our water supply as an easy way to climb out of debt, and avoided pipeline repairs.

The financial usefulness then became the key consideration rather than respecting the asset's intended purpose, which was to provide water security for the town, an essential industry whereby the town earned an income (self-sustaining); a means to provide valuable training and careers to support our local families, and other industry possibilities that were in the pipeline to expand on that industry.

We therefore put the state government on notice that we require direct and sincere consultation etc before anyone moves forward on this election announcement.

It is important to state clearly that the desalination facility was established through direct community initiative and contribution. Any transfer of this asset without transparent valuation, compensation, or formal community consent raises serious concerns about the protection of locally developed infrastructure.

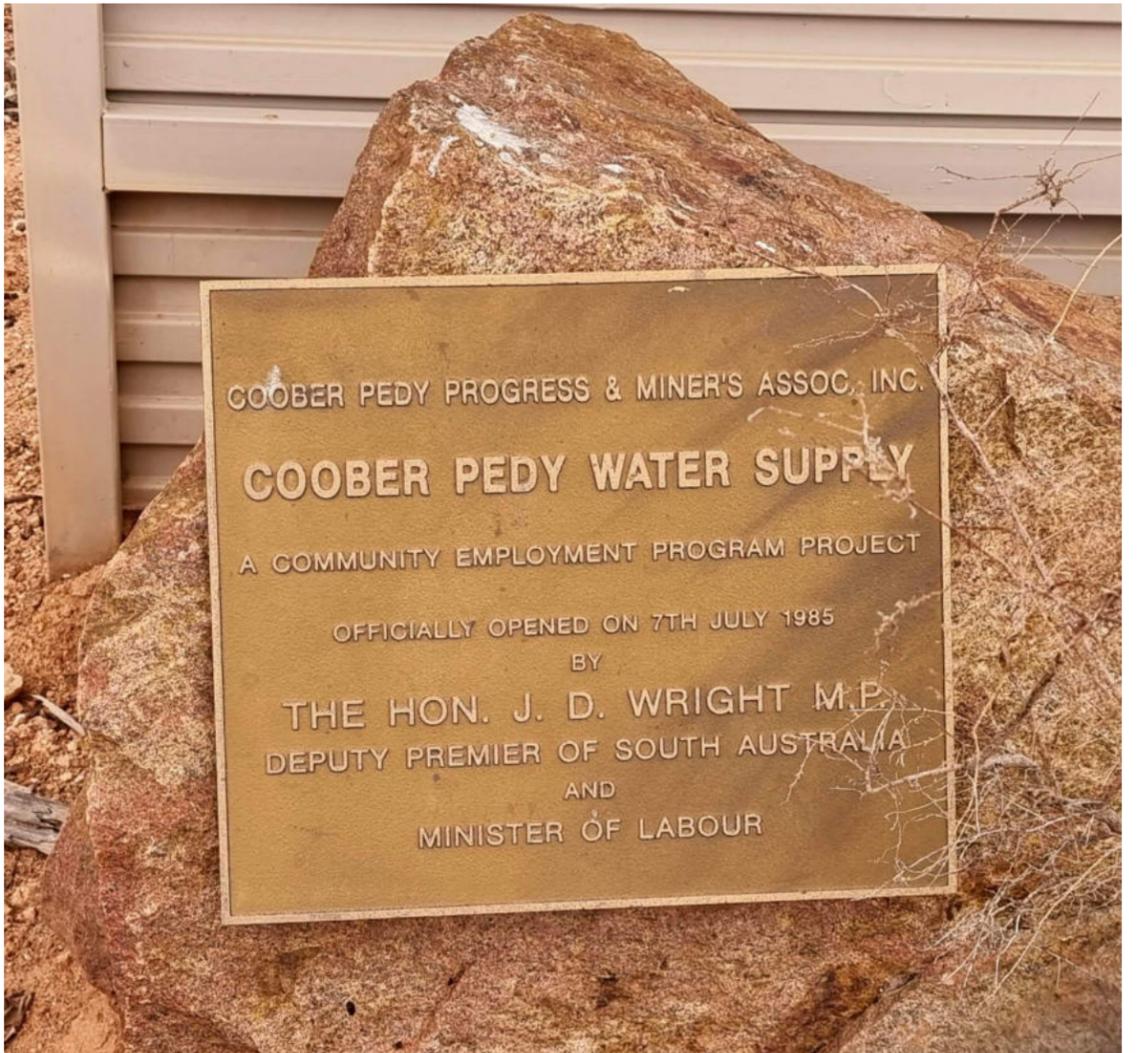
The community has previously supported a model in which the desalination facility could be leased through open tender while remaining locally owned.

We now question why this option, and other funding avenues commonly available for remote water infrastructure, were not explored before proposing permanent transfer of ownership.

We also note that during the extended period of administration, there has been no visible pursuit of remote infrastructure grant funding pathways. Repairs and upgrades to remote water systems are frequently supported through Federal programs, and usually preceded by an expression of interest notification.

The prospect of transferring a community-established asset without first exhausting external funding opportunities or alternative management structures warrants careful public scrutiny.

It would be deeply concerning if an asset developed through community initiative were transferred into state ownership primarily due to administrative incapacity rather than structural necessity. Such a precedent requires a transparent explanation and clear justification to the residents who built and sustained this infrastructure.



A plaque inside the Water Supply yard is a record of our Desalination Plant history

Coober Pedy has experienced prolonged and unsatisfactory administration with significant uncertainty in recent years. Confidence will not be restored through media statements alone. It will only be restored through transparency, consultation, and respect for the community's history, contribution and genuine future benefit.

We formally request that the Government provide a detailed transition proposition, undertake genuine public consultation in Coober Pedy before seeking to finalise any proposed transfer, and clarify the ownership status and valuation of the desalination plant before any decision is pursued.

Many of us believe a change of government at this time, would provide a more democratic and respectful outcome.

We look forward to your very prompt and comprehensive response.

Yours sincerely,

Coober Pedy Community Alliance

New Water Production Equipment Installed

Over the past 3 weeks Council staff and Contractors have been installing new Water Treatment equipment into the existing Water production facility. Council has replaced a 30 year old Pre-treatment system with a new stainless steel Pre-treatment system.

This system is the component of the water plant that removes iron and manganese from the bore water. This plant then feeds water into the Reverse Osmosis plant.

Council put the project out to tender 18 months ago and Veolia Water Solutions won the contract to manufacture the new plant. The plant was delivered onto site in March 2015. Council staff and contractors have since worked to ensure the plant would be commissioned by the end of May 2015.

The original Pre-Treatment plant is estimated to have produced in the order of 6.5 Billion litres of water. This is quite a remarkable feat considering the low quality of water that is received from our bore site. We believe with this new plant we can produce another 6.5 Billion litres of water or more.

A large congratulations to all staff and contractors involved with this major project. They managed to be able to complete the upgrade with no loss of supply to the community and any time.



30 year old Pre-treatment system



Council Staff in front of New Plant RO1

33.2mm RAIN IN COOBER PEDY OVER A THREE DAY PERIOD

According to official Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) data, the 72-hour rainfall total for Coober Pedy (Station 016090) from Friday to Sunday morning was **33.2 mm**, with daily totals recorded at 9:00 am.

The observed rainfall breakdown shows Coober Pedy **3.0 mm on Friday, 14.2 mm on Saturday, and 16.0 mm on Sunday.**

For the same period nearby Oodnadatta recorded 20.44mm



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ONE NATION WILL SLASH COUNCIL BUREAUCRATS TO SAVE ON RATES.

For a South Australian election commitment, One Nation have proposed the following:

- Comprehensive local government reform will be one of our party's top priorities.
- Our proposal will streamline administration and slash the bureaucracies that are the greatest burden on ratepayers.
- Elected council members should determine council priorities, not unelected bureaucrats.

Bureaucracy will be restructured and reduced – while full local representation is maintained – in a bid to put people back in charge of their local councils and save money for ratepayers under a new One Nation policy on urgently-needed local government reform.

One Nation SA Legislative Council candidate Carlos Quaremba said the proposal involved splitting the state into three administrative zones, requiring only three chief executives instead of the current 67 earning an average of \$350,000 per year.

“Council debts are growing, with total local government liabilities at almost \$1.2 billion,” Mr Quaremba said. “Councils are groaning under the weight of increasing expenses, profligate spending outside core responsibilities, and a state government shifting more and more burdens onto them.

“This burden inevitably falls on South Australian ratepayers, right in the middle of Labor’s cost-of-living crisis. It’s not just unsustainable. It’s immoral.

“Comprehensive local government reform will be one of our party’s top priorities. Our proposal will streamline administration and slash the bureaucracies that are the greatest burden on ratepayers.

We’ll keep the all the councils and their elected members, and consult the community about which councils should be in which zones.

“We’re not stopping there. One Nation will also explore the introduction of a two-tiered rates system which will give ratepayers a choice on whether to pay only for non-negotiable essential council services like road maintenance and rubbish collection, or to pay a higher level of rates to fund non-essential items proposed by councils.

“We’ll scrap those parts of the Local Government Act 1999 which effectively stop elected members speaking out freely on behalf of their constituents. These parts are weaponised by bureaucracies against councillors who don’t toe the line, forcing them to remain silent about poor decisions, budget deficits, woke nonsense and growing lack of accountability and transparency increasingly plaguing local government.

One Nation will also move to cap rate increases to the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

“We’re going to restore true democracy to councils and put long-suffering ratepayers back in charge of their local governments.”



The Administration Experiment



Minister for Local Government, Hon Joe Szakacs MP (left) Commits that Coober Pedy will be exiting Administration and returning to "local" Government at the end of 2026

Letter to the editor.

As we have entered year 8 of government-appointed administration of the District Council of Coober Pedy (DCCP), I thought I might take the liberty to express my views on the marvellous work that 6 administrators and 8 CEO's have achieved since 24 January 2019. Remarkably, all have survived and enjoyed immense financial benefits courtesy of the Coober Pedy ratepayers.

When the minister for local government, Mr Stefan Knoll, appointed and recommended Mr Tim Jackson as the inaugural Administrator on 24 January 2019, there was no fanfare or public announcement. It was a 12-month appointment, and considering that Mr Jackson apparently needed no local assistance, the recently elected council was suspended as a defaulting council for 12 months.

Mr Jackson obviously thought he could do everything on his own; otherwise, he would have hit the ground running armed with a South Australian-trained CEO and a forensic accountant, both of whom he could have sourced in Adelaide, knowing he had only 12 months to work his magic. He and an independent CEO could have immediately formulated a strategy to stabilise the ship, and the accountant could have investigated the books to ensure there were no irregularities and therefore no stain on previous councillors. Then collectively find a pathway to financial sustainability. Neither occurred, and this was the first of many blunders. He was either poorly briefed or had no respect for the job he was engaged to do. We did not know at that early stage that Jackson's former council at Playford, had not seen fit to renew his CEO contract.

At Jackson's monthly council meetings, he regurgitated the same material ad infinitum, but remarkably, nothing that would make the council sustainable. His acting CEO, Mr Colin Pitman, was demoted to Works Manager and was replaced by Mr Dean Miller on 1st October, leaving Mr Jackson and Mr Miller 3 months before the councillors of the 'defaulting council' would be reinstated. However, during Mr Pitman's tenure as acting CEO for Mr Jackson, an 'administrative oversight' in September by both resulted in the suspended councillors now becoming permanently removed from office. At that point, Coober Pedy ratepayers lost their locally elected representatives and any chance of having any involvement in the progress of their own town. No effort to have them reinstated, either by the administration, the Minister or Eddie Hughes or Geoff Brock, was forthcoming.

At Jackson's monthly council meetings, he regurgitated the same material ad infinitum, but remarkably, nothing that would make the council sustainable. His acting CEO, Mr Colin Pitman, was demoted to Works Manager and was replaced by Mr Dean Miller on 1st October, leaving Mr Jackson and Mr Miller 3 months before the councillors of the 'defaulting council' would be reinstated. However, during Mr Pitman's tenure as acting CEO for Mr Jackson, an 'administrative oversight' in September by both resulted in the suspended councillors now becoming permanently removed from office. At that point, Coober Pedy ratepayers lost their locally elected representatives and any chance of having any involvement in the progress of their own town. No effort to have them reinstated, either by the administration, the Minister or Eddie Hughes or Geoff Brock, was forthcoming.

The DCCP was then firmly secured by FIFO bureaucrats and remained as such to this day. Basically, pay up and shut up. Talk was cheap, and although Mr Jackson preached transparency, he rarely practised it. He harped on about good debt and bad debt and produced a debenture document that would see the DCCP borrowing \$17m and in debt of \$17m by 2026. That was the plan. How to make a council sustainable. Borrow against the operating figure of the council, which at that time was about \$17m. More borrowings and more debt. Thankfully, the Local Government Finance Authority (LGFA) stepped in and advised Mr Jackson and Mr Miller that their financial reports of the DCCP did not support their grandiose plan, as they could not service the debt. Therefore, the test of council sustainability would be determined by the LGFA.

To date, the DCCP continues to operate in deficit, even though in 2020 Mr Miller told Premier Steven Marshall that under his tenure, the DCCP for the first time in 10 years recorded a profit of \$500k. In 2023, administrator Mr Geoff Sheridan told the Local Government Minister the same thing, and later incumbent CEO Scott Reardon told the same thing to the Minister in 2024. Three different people all claiming the title, yet unable to convince the LGFA. Amazing.

During November 2019, Mr Jackson and Mr Miller embarked upon the opportunity to sell the Water Plant as a going concern in an attempt to eradicate the \$9-\$11 million debt attached to the DCCP. There were apparently 7 interested suitors to either purchase the entire plant, lease it or manage it. However, Mr Jackson elected to have SA Water attend Coober Pedy and assess it. Their report became a sealed document, and apparently, the government had not the slightest interest in getting involved with it. Mr Jackson's opportunity to have 7 potential tenders on offer gave him the opportunity of 7 commercial valuations at no cost, yet his decision to involve SA Water remains a mystery. In late 2022, he admitted at a council meeting that he, his CEO and Finance Officer had 'botched' the tender process and they were completely at fault. Apparently, a new report was later prepared by another outside firm for \$232000, but when asked, he declined to answer.

Mr Jackson finally left after almost 4 years and was replaced by Mr Geoff Sheridan as principal administrator, assisted by Mr John Moyle and Mrs Erica Vickery in March 2023. Mr Sheridan had little to offer except to raise rates, water costs, and make no cuts to operating costs and overheads, obviously aided and abetted by Mr Moyle and Mrs Vickery, who must have conceded that was the only solution to the council's sustainability.

Mr Moyle, in particular, was forever correcting the grammar of various documents to ensure commas were correctly placed and that proper governance was observed. Mr Sheridan, who was bullied by the Union, offered no resistance and tolerated CEO's who were marking time at Coober Pedy waiting for their next call to move onto greener pastures within local government. He finally sought refuge in retirement under the guise of health and personal reasons after 18 months in the top job. Mr Moyle and Mrs Vickery remained as assistant administrators to Mr Patrick Conlon when he was appointed in November 2024

Recently, it was announced by Mr Conlon that the state government would take over the management of the Water Plant at the end of 2026. I'm presuming this will come at no cost to the government, as Mr Jackson managed to devalue the water plant from a \$5m plus asset to nil. I have a blurred image of this. We are in election mode, and this smacks of a Labour promise that probably won't happen. If it did eventuate, that would occur after the November council elections and Coober Pedy is assured by the Minister that the town will revert to a locally elected council. Secondly, the DCCP has been so poorly administered by government-appointed administrators that in the 8th year of administration, the council is no closer to sustainability than it was on 24th January 2019. Currently, the cost to ratepayers for FIFO Administrators and CEO's since 2019 would be in the vicinity of \$4m, probably more.

Year after year, Administrator after Administrator, CEO after CEO it seems these positions are a cash cow with no guarantee of a positive result. The only guarantee is that in November this year, South Australian local council elections will be held. If Coober Pedy is returned to local government, as it should have been in January 2020, there will be 8 gap years to contend with. This is a dangerous proposition for Coober Pedy, but an indicator to the government that appointing administrators under current guidelines has not worked and that the six regional councils currently identified by the minister as needing administrators would not want to suffer the same fate as the DCCP, which has been a very poor model.

Consider this. Coober Pedy is recognised as the Opal Capital of the World. It is fortuitously situated approximately midway between Alice Springs and Port Augusta on the Stuart Highway. It is a tourist destination. It is unique in many regards and has so much to offer. Yet government appointed Administrators and the bureaucrats don't see it like that. In my view, they are blind to commercial opportunities and most of the things that councils are responsible for. Having FIFO administration is a major contributor to poor governance. When a business is performing badly and unable to return to profit, private enterprise would have fixed it within 12 months or earlier with serious planning and execution. Not so apparently with this government-appointed administration, which has floundered for 8 years with no solution in sight. If Coober Pedy returns to local government in November, it will be interesting to see what support and compensation will be forthcoming from the incumbent government. Liberal and Labour are both responsible and, therefore, both need to identify and take ownership of the DCCP dilemma.

Des Roffey (Former Elected Member)

Community Questions for “STUART” Candidates



Leon Stephens (Liberal)

Leon Stephens, Liberal Candidate for Stuart

1. Power Reliability and Cost

Coober Pedy’s hybrid power system must be independently reviewed to assess performance, reliability and cost efficiency. Technologies have advanced significantly, and we need to understand where improvements can be made to existing infrastructure.

What the town needs is a reduction in outages and long-term electricity costs. A Hurn Liberal Government is prepared to reduce our state’s energy costs by investing in gas power and stabilising the grid.

2. Water Security and Infrastructure

Water security is critical to Coober Pedy’s future.

A Hurn Liberal Government would focus on equity of water for users. We also know that water efficiency projects are often a better solution for regional communities. We will work to:

- Improve pumping efficiency, including solar integration
- Identifying and repairing leaks through staged network monitoring.
- Assessing whether the Reverse Osmosis plant requires refurbishment or replacement.

Coober Pedy pays significantly more for water than most South Australians. Efficiency upgrades should reduce long-term operating costs and improve reliability.

3. Roads and Transport Access

The Liberals have committed \$1 billion to clear the regional road maintenance backlog.

For Coober Pedy and the Far North, priorities include:

- Safer township roads, particularly those used by tourists and caravans.
- Structured grading programs for dangerous unsealed link roads.

Upgrades will be staged over four years, with State support to help Council catch up on long-delayed works.

4. Health Services and Emergency Care

A Hurn Liberal Government will fix the PATS.

Attracting doctors to remote communities requires meaningful incentives and structured contracts that provide certainty.

A Hurn Liberal Government has committed to scholarships and incentives for nurses and midwives to ensure we have a skilled workforce coming through the pipeline, with incentives to move to regional and rural communities.

5. Housing Quality and Availability

Vacant and deteriorating housing must be addressed.

As a Mayor working in a regional town, I know that State and local government working together could make a difference and deliver some great outcomes. If elected as your local Member of Parliament, I’ll work to make sure those collaborations happen.

6. Jobs and Economic Diversification

There is potential for the opal industry to be further developed. By expanding local cutting, grading, and polishing services, Coober Pedy could command higher prices and attract international buyers.

Supporting local enterprise development will strengthen long-term economic sustainability. A Hurn Liberal Government would support investigating ways to improve trade and investment for South Australia.

7. Cost of Living

A Hurn Liberal Government will get the basics right for South Australian households. Reducing utility costs is key. We’ll get the costs down on electricity by securing gas fire generation and stabilising our state’s energy grid.

Freight costs should also be examined, including potential partnerships with mining logistics providers to reduce supply costs into town.

8. Education and Youth Retention

Young people need stronger local employment pathways.

Incentives for apprenticeships and partnerships with local businesses can help build skills while keeping families in town. We have committed to removing payroll tax for apprentices and trainees, which is aimed at encouraging more local businesses to take on young workers.

A Hurn Liberal Government will also invest in Uni Hub Spencer Gulf, meaning that people looking for higher education and training don’t have to travel as far as they used to.

9–13. Public Safety, Policing and Alcohol Harm

Public safety must be prioritised. This includes:

- Increasing SAPOL resources and reviewing deployment models. A Hurn Liberal Government will incentive more police to move to regional areas. We are also committed to improving overall recruitment.
- Strengthening enforcement around repeat offenders. Our team is serious about reducing recidivism in all offenders. We believe that if you break bail, you should face jail.
- Supporting practical alcohol harm reduction measures. There are experts in this field, and like all things, a Liberal team will listen to the science and the specialists.
- Ensuring public spaces remain safe and maintained. Like many things in regional town, a Liberal Government would work hand in hand with local Councils to address issues on the ground.
- Supporting local businesses and victims impacted by crime. Businesses are sick of repeat offenders causing damage and harm. Our team have been clear: a Hurn Liberal Government would be serious about dealing with crime.

14. Community Voice

Local residents must be properly consulted before major decisions are finalised. That’s why our candidates this election are on the ground in their electorates and truly local.

Good governance requires transparent engagement and accountability. If elected as your representative, I would ensure your voice is heard in Parliament.

15. FIFO and Local Administration

Where possible, stability in key public service roles should be encouraged. Longer tenures and relocation incentives should be explored to ensure continuity to bring down local utilities and improving your cost of living.

2. Delivering priority road maintenance works in and around Coober Pedy.
3. Rolling out our policies for regional police recruitment and improved regional health systems.

Progress should be publicly reported so the community can track delivery.

16. Government Department Accountability

Remote communities deserve fair treatment from government agencies.

Policies must reflect the realities of limited connectivity and distance. A one-size-fits-all approach does not work in the Far North. That’s why electing a Hurn Liberal Government matters; our candidates are locals.

17. Accountability and Delivery

In a first term, I would commit to:

1. Advocating for power and water infrastructure upgrades to bring down local utilities and improving your cost of living.
2. Delivering priority road maintenance works in and around Coober Pedy.
3. Rolling out our policies for regional police recruitment and improved regional health systems.

Progress should be publicly reported so the community can track delivery.

Community Questions for “STUART” Candidates

Geoff Brock Independent Candidate for Stuart



Geoff Brock (Independent)

“The people of Coober Pedy are passionate about their town and have a huge amount of local knowledge and a lot of ideas about opportunities for the future and what they want to see.

Having visited and spoken to many locals over the years, this is a community that is incredibly frustrated and feels like it hasn't been listened to, with decisions about the town being made by people who don't live here. I don't have any quick, easy solutions, and I don't want to be someone else who tells the community what's good for them.

If I'm elected to represent Stuart in March, my commitment is to listen to you and work with the community to find the long-term solutions you want, so Coober Pedy can grow and thrive into the future.

I've lived and worked in the Far North for years – on Frome Downs in my childhood, and spent a lot of time in Coober Pedy during my time as an area manager with BP Australia. I love spending time in this community and hope I get the opportunity to represent you as your next state Member of Parliament in March.

As an Independent Member of Parliament I don't have to answer to party bosses or toe a party line. My philosophy is to go straight to whoever is holding the purse strings, and have a long history of working with all sides of the Parliament to get things done for the communities I've represented.

For all the issues identified, my priority will be to work with the community to get the full information on the current situation and then work with the community to evaluate potential solutions and help them make a fully informed decision about their future direction.

This might not be quick, but the community deserve to have all the information and be a big part of the decisions that affect them.”



Coober Pedy's Water Dispensing Station is subject to constant vandalism, while a reliable water point at a more convenient location was decommissioned unnecessarily

Accountability and delivery – what three specific measurable commitments will you make for this town in your first term, and how can voters track whether you deliver them?

1. To get all the information and data on the current situation for all of the issues listed – water, power, roads, health, housing, education, jobs and economic growth, public safety, policing and town amenities. As your local representative, I will work to access data from a range of sources, including government departments, NGO's, and private interests like mining companies to get a full picture.
2. To work with the community to investigate and evaluate a range of solutions and options to each of these issues and to do this in a very thorough and structured way, so everyone has their say and input, and this is pulled together into a clear plan that residents agree on for their future. As your local representative, I want to hear the views of everyone who calls Coober Pedy home - young people, the elderly, people who have lived here a long time and new residents to the town.
3. To ensure the community has a much bigger say in the decision-making about how they want to tackle each of these issues going forward. If the community themselves have a clear and agreed plan for their future, I will be fighting to make sure the government trusts this local knowledge and abide by the collective wishes of the community. As your local representative, my job will be to work with all sides of the parliament to make sure the community's wishes and priorities are implemented. Regardless of who is in power, I will be taking the voice of the CP community straight to parliament.

Power reliability and cost – what actions will you take in your first term to improve power reliability and reduce electricity costs in Coober Pedy, and how will you fund them?

Firstly, communicate with the community to understand their current situation. Carry out a detailed investigation with the current Electricity Supply Company, ascertain the current contracts and prices and work with the Government to look at other potential opportunities for secure, affordable power

Water security and infrastructure - given the neglect of our essential infrastructure over the past 8 years under administration, what is your plan to secure a long-term, affordable water supply?

As I was able to better understand the community's feelings about the current water systems, again, ascertain from the community what would be their best results, and then once this information is available, request that the relevant State Government Minister visit Coober Pedy to have an honest discussion with the people and to advise all facts and costs for any other opportunity.

Roads and transport access – which roads affecting Coober Pedy and the Far North will you prioritise for upgrades, and what timeline and budget will you commit to?

There are many roads leading to and also from Coober Pedy. A full audit of all the road corridors should be undertaken and a "master plan" established and to work collaboratively with both the State Government and also the Federal Government

Health services and emergency care: how will you improve access to doctors, nurses, specialists, aged care, mental health services and emergency care for local residents

With the establishment of the new Nursing Training Facility at Port Augusta and the new RFDS Allied Health and Medical Training facility at Port Augusta, these new projects will train the required personnel in our own backyard, which will assist the opportunity for those involved to reside in our region. Also, to work with the relevant State Government Ministers and Federal Ministers to provide incentives to attract the required professionals to live in our communities.

Housing quality and availability - what will you do to help restore the quality of existing housing, with vacant housing currently being dismantled by outside influences?

From my numerous visits to Coober Pedy over the last 18 months, it has been very evident that there are several vacant houses, in many cases, with the owners living away from the community. With regard to new housing, incentives need to be sought to attract financial assistance for their repair or construction of new homes.

Jobs and economic diversification – bearing in mind Coober Pedy is in a remote location and needs to generate self-sufficiency, how will you help create stable, long-term jobs beyond tourism and mining?

Work with State and Federal Government to ascertain what categories of work can be established at Coober Pedy, e.g. More Health workers to live in the township and not be FIFO, also to attract more teachers and Police

Cost of living and working in a remote town – what concrete measures will you support to reduce the higher costs of food, fuel, freight and basic goods for remote areas?

I will liaise with all State Government Ministers and Agencies to endeavour to attract subsidies for living costs, such as the essentials. Power and water are the big financial burdens. With regard to the cost of perishables and the like, the ever-increasing costs for fuels are the contributing factors facing the private transport sector.

As I mentioned at the Alliance Community meeting; in previous times, the Federal and State Governments offered a “Fuel subsidy” which ensured that the public in outback and regional South Australia received a subsidy from the fuel suppliers; however, this was discontinued some years ago. I will be following up on this situation and endeavour to have the subsidy returned by the Federal Government

Education, training and keeping young people local – how will you improve local education, training and apprenticeship pathways so young people can build a future in their hometown?

There is a current TAFE Operation in the community; however, this is not operating at a capacity to be able to train young people for employment. I will also investigate what employment categories, e.g. Diesel Mechanics, etc., are required for the surrounding industries and the lack of trained people in the business community

Public safety and antisocial behaviour – the town faces serious problems with vandalism, arson, theft and alcohol related disorder. What specific, funded measures will you implement to improve safety?

Public safety is a grave concern, and in this situation, far more planning needs to be carried out. More public lighting needs to be installed to ensure that the areas are well-lit at night. Again, a full discussion with the community to allow for a more detailed direction to be undertaken

Policing and enforcement – will you commit to increasing police numbers, resources or permanent presence in the town and if so, by how much and by when?

Establish a local working committee in collaboration with the Police Minister and the Police Commissioner to identify any assistance packages or incentives for more Police to want to come to Coober Pedy, not refuse or decline any requests.

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE

Friday 27 February 2026

Community Questions For “STUART” Candidates

Geoff Brock Independent Candidate for Stuart



Q: Alcohol harm reduction – what changes will you pursue to reduce alcohol related harm, including violence, property damage and public disorder?

A: Ensure that the relevant situation is policed, the drinking outside licenced premises, excluding at your residence, is policed correctly
Ensure that the relevant Health Departments are present to assist those who may require assistance to overcome any issues that they may have at the moment.

Also, ensure that there is more present assistance for any domestic violence activities

Q: Protecting public spaces and children’s areas – what will you do to keep playgrounds, parks and public spaces safe, clean and usable for families and children?

A: Work with the community to better understand what facilities that the parents are looking for and to ensure that the relevant safety precautions around each location is maintained and regular clean up of the areas that the children might be participating in.

Q: Support for victims and local businesses – what support will you provide to residents and businesses affected by theft, vandalism, arson and repeated property damage?

A: This is where the community should be listened to more than it has been in the past.

By ensuring more Police are enticed to locate to Coober Pedy, it will be better for the safety of the community and also the business community.

With the police apprehending an offender, the relevant Magistrates in the Courts should be treating every offence more correctly, other than letting them just go without consequences

Q: FIFO – remote areas are being robbed of their “local” council. Will you assist to stabilise tenure of public servants involved in the management of our council and essential services by reoffering relocation packages?

A: This situation is in line with many of the above questions and answers,

The more that we improve the safety and the ambience of Coober Pedy and the “lifestyle”, the better opportunities there are with attracting workers to live in the community with their families, not just be here for a short period, then fly out.

Q: Growing threats from government departments – how will you improve the services provided by government departments and the growing threats from departments like Centrelink – if you don’t respond to their email by the time dictated, your pension will be suspended, vehicle licencing will suspend your licence and now Westpac bank will make your bank account inaccessible if you don’t do something the government wants changed?

A: Whilst this question covers both State and Federal Agencies, personnel from all Government Agencies need to better understand the financial situation for those who might be having any financial struggles

Q: Community voice in decision making – how will you ensure local stakeholders have a genuine say in decisions about power, water, housing and services before decisions are finalised?

A: AS I have learnt from my numerous visits over the past 18 months, it is very evident that the community has been “TOLD’ and not “ASKED”

In my current Electorate, I hold regular “LISTENING POSTS” where people come to me with confidence that their privacy is respected,

Another way to better understand any community is to walk around the community, visit shops, sporting events and to be: Open” to hear ideas and to LISTEN.

Geoff Brock (Independent)



Rob Dempster speaking with Geoff Brock



Geoff and Norbert doing a deal on action.



Anita Kuss & Geoff with John Di Donna



John and Geoff discuss Gun Laws.

DIALYSIS PATIENT, 'BIG BROTHER' ROBBED AGAIN

POLICE REPORT: An unknown male approached an elderly resident in his home, asking him for money, which was declined. The man’s Mobility Scooter and bike were taken in response. Both items were later located by police and returned to the owner. According to the police, further inquiries are still to be made.

Milimir Belosevic, aged 84, and a long term resident of Coober Pedy said, “. This trouble would not be happening if the council had attended to the repairs after the flood last year. The damages done by the water from the block culverts coming into my property has severely damaged my security gates and they won’t shut properly or lock. I have no sense of security.”

Mr. Belosevic said he is looking for a lawyer to help him deal with the council issues.

Last year Mr. Belosevic’s property suffered severe damages during a major rain event that caused severe damages to local roads. Two culverts opposite and beside his property were completely blocked and the water from the rain diverted into his yard causing inconvenience and damages.

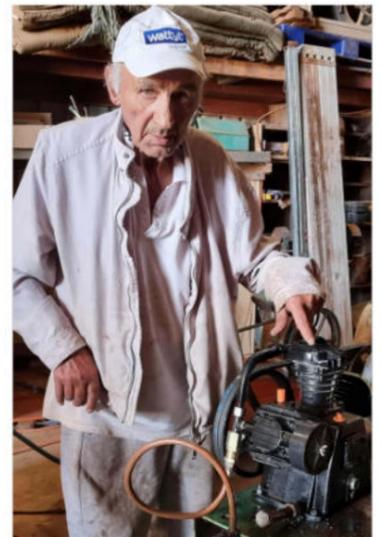


After the water had subsided, Mr. Belosevic sustained a fall from his mobility scooter, trying to navigate the trenches caused by the flooding. “If it wasn’t for one of the locals turning up and rescuing me from the trench, I might have died there”, he said.

Mr. Belosevic was committed to hospital shortly afterwards and now receives regular dialysis. He believes the council to be negligent with it’s maintenance both before and after those rain events.



During the recent robbery, Mr. Belosevic said, the thieves not only smashed his mobility scooters, they smashed his equipment and other items with a hammer trying to persuade him to give them money



and alcohol. They also took food. Throughout the workshop is a trail of smashed equipment. “A good start to help stop crime would be for council to play their part.”

WILLIAM CREEK GYMKHANA & MOTOKHANA

MARCH 28TH 2026 - 8.00AM

Horse Events

JUNIOR & JUVENILE HORSE EVENTS
 Sponsored by William Creek Hotel & Wrightsair

1. Junior Walk & Trot
2. Junior Bending
3. Junior Keyhole
4. Junior Quoits
5. Junior Barrels
6. Junior Can & Stick
7. Junior Consolation
8. Junior Monte Carlo u/8
9. Juvenile Walk, Trot & Lead
10. Juvenile Bending
11. Juvenile Keyhole
12. Juvenile Quoits
13. Juvenile Barrels
14. Juvenile Flag & Barrel
15. Juvenile Swap Over (2)
16. Juvenile Consolation

ADULT HORSE EVENTS

17. Billa Kalina Pastoral Bending
18. Goolagong Angus Stud Keyhole
19. Dick Nunn Memorial Barrels
20. Nutrien Livestock Balaklava Flag & Barrel
21. Australian Meat Group * Thread the Needle
22. Williams Cattle Company ** Knock Out Pony Poles
23. Welke Transport * Swap Over Race (2)
24. Dunns Earthmoving * Teams Potato Race (3)
25. OMS Mechanical Walk, Trot & Gallop

AT THE GROUNDS

Free Camping & Showers
 Horse Yards Available
 EFTPOS/Square Facilities

FRIDAY

Bar open/tea available 4-9pm
 Horse Events: RXG Drilling Horse Quoits,
 Windy Creek Pastoral Tilting the Ring,
 Kent Saddlery Whip Cracking
 Outback Pest Control Crowd Novelty Events

SATURDAY

RFDS in attendance
 Rural Aid in attendance
 Food/Bar available all day
 Schnitzel Tea
 Live Music - Gav Chandler

CROWDEVENTS

Roxby Earthmoving ** Ringers Challenge
 Senturion Steel Boot Toss
 Wonambi Opal Egg Toss
 D & G Tyres Bar Quoits
 Fire Equip Maintenance Group Piggy Back Races
 Ben Du Bois Electrical & Refrigeration Stepping the Distance
 Geoff & Adam Kohler Kids Coin Drop

Motorbike Events

JUNIOR & JUVENILE MOTORBIKE EVENTS
 Sponsored by Brendan Ehlen
 & CMV Group Foundation

26. Junior Boys Bending
27. Junior Girls Bending
28. Junior Run & Ride
29. Junior Boys Barrels
30. Junior Girls Barrels
31. Junior Keyhole
32. Junior Go Slow
33. Junior Mystery Pair Swap Over (2)
34. Junior Consolation
35. Junior Monte Carlo u/8
36. Juvenile Boys Bending
37. Juvenile Girls Bending
38. Juvenile Hop, Skip & Jump
39. Juvenile Mystery Pair Swap Over (2)
40. Juvenile Boys Barrels
41. Juvenile Girls Barrels
42. Juvenile Keyhole
43. Juvenile Run & Ride
44. Juvenile Bang & Go Back
45. Juvenile Consolation

ADULT MOTORBIKE EVENTS

46. Costello Cattle Company Mens Bending
47. Adelaide Galvanising Industries Ladies Bending
48. BHP ** Knock Out Figure 8 (16+)
49. Circle C Barrels
50. KLR Jamestown Ladies Barrels
51. Perrys Fuel Gretna Green (16+)
52. MyEnergy Engineering Ladies Swap Over Pairs (2)
53. Sheehan Transport & Cattle Contracting Run & Ride
54. JMC Diesel * Teams Race (3)
55. DK Pastoral * Thread the Needle
56. Ridsdale Electrical Keyhole
57. McArdle Freight * Track Mono (timed)

WHAT TO KNOW

Preferred nominations to be completed
 via pre-nom platform
 Limited secretary box Saturday
 ** Feature Events
 Leading Rider Prizes
 Encouragement Awards
 Horse of the Day

Rules/Conditions:

- All riders compete at their own risk
- Competitors must sign a waiver form & pay insurance
- Maximum of 2 horses per events permitted
- Junior (under 10 years) Juvenile (10-15 years) Senior (16+ years)
- Leading rider points to unassisted riders
- Consolation Race is for competitors who have not placed in any event
- Can ride up an age group at discretion of committee/dependent on numbers
- Committees' decision is final and not subject to any appeal/protest
- The committee reserves the right to change/alter programme at any time
- Enquiries and pre-nominations to Hollie nilpinna.ath@bigpond.com/0428752285/facebook messenger



\$23,000
 Money & Prizes



William Creek Australian National Bronco Branding Championships August 15th 2026



2013 at William Creek



**William Creek
 Gymkhana &
 Motokhana
 Saturday March 28
 Beginning at 8am**

**Only 4 weeks until the
 William Creek Gymkhana
 & Motokhana!**

There's so much happening across the weekend - action-packed horse events, thrilling bike competitions, and plenty of crowd novelties to keep everyone entertained. It's shaping up to be a fantastic weekend for competitors and spectators alike.

A huge thank you to our incredible sponsors and hardworking committee - thanks to their support we have an amazing \$23,000 up for grabs in prize money and prizes!

Pre-nominations will be released closer to the event and are the preferred method of nominating, so keep an eye out for those details.

We're looking forward to a great weekend of fun, sportsmanship, and community friendship. Make sure you mark it on your calendar - you won't want to miss it!

The William Creek Gymkhana has grown from a small outback gathering into one of the region's most enduring community traditions, reflecting the resilience and social spirit of pastoral life in Australia's far north.

Established more than five decades ago, the event began as an informal day of friendly competition and social connection for station families and travellers scattered across vast distances.

Early organisers, including long serving Dick Nunn of Anna Creek Station, recognised the need for an annual occasion that brought neighbours together, combining horsemanship, practical bush skills and recreation at a time when isolation was simply part of everyday life.

Over the years the William Creek Gymkhana has evolved into a much anticipated fixture on the outback calendar, drawing competitors and spectators from pastoral stations, roadhouses and regional towns across northern South Australia.

Horse events remained central to the program, celebrating stock handling traditions passed down through generations, while motorbike activities were later added as machinery became a normal part of station work. The event has always balanced competition with community, placing equal importance on shared meals, storytelling and renewing friendships formed across long distances.

Today, the surrounding station owners, their staff and families and the William Creek town crew continue the tradition to ensure the Gymkhana retains its volunteer driven character. Locals and visitors work side by side to prepare the grounds, organise events and feed the crowds, maintaining a strong sense of continuity between past and present organisers.

Long time contributors have become part of the event's identity, including cooks and helpers who return year after year purely for the camaraderie and tradition. Among these familiar faces is John Hobbs, widely known as Hobbsie, a former engine driver on The Ghan who once passed through the region by rail during his working life.

Now retired, Hobbsie travelled annually from Port Broughton to continue a decades long role preparing vegetables for the communal evening roast, and manning the barbecue all day long, a task he carried out for nearly forty years. In recent years he has been capably helped by the support of Rev Sunny and the amazing people from Frontier Services who also help in the kitchen.

Sadly Hobbsie is not well enough to attend this year's event, but stories like his capture the essence of the William Creek Gymkhana, an event sustained not by formality - but by loyalty, shared history and the enduring desire of outback communities to gather, celebrate and keep their traditions alive.

William Creek Gymkhana and Motokhana March 28th 2026



The Bronco Branding and Cow Work to be held on August 15, 2026



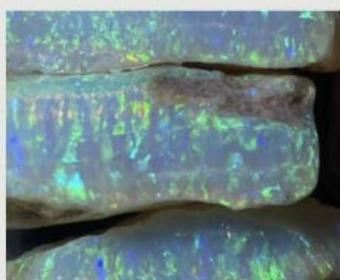
COOBER PEDY GEM TRADE SHOW - 2026

2026 COOBER PEDY GEM TRADE SHOW



FRIDAY 3RD APRIL
MEET & GREET
LOCATION - TBA

SATURDAY 4TH APRIL & SUNDAY 5TH APRIL
9AM - 5PM
GEM TRADE SHOW
LOCATION - CROATIAN CLUB



CONTACT US CPGEMTRADESHOW@OUTLOOK.COM

EMPLOYMENT

MAKING A DIFFERENCE SO SOUTH AUSTRALIA THRIVES
Government of South Australia

COMMUNITY SERVICE SUPERVISOR

Department for Correctional Services
Coober Pedy Community Correctional Centre
Casual
Vacancy No: 835506
\$30.01 to \$32.28 per hour plus 25% casual loading (OPS2)

For more information and how to apply visit: www.iworkfor.sa.gov.au/jobs

Applications close: 11pm, 8 March 2026

IWORKFOR.SA.gov.au

MAKING A DIFFERENCE SO SOUTH AUSTRALIA THRIVES
Government of South Australia

TEAM SUPERVISOR (REMOTE)

Department for Correctional Services
Coober Pedy Community Correctional Centre
Ongoing
Vac No: 831599
\$98,478 - \$116,216 pa (ASO6/PO3/AHP3)

For more information and how to apply visit: www.iworkfor.sa.gov.au

Applications close: 11pm, 22 March 2026

IWORKFOR.SA.gov.au

FOR SALE

* DAY OLD CHICK \$6.50,
* 16 WEEKS POL PULLETS \$26.00,
* 574 MAGILL ROAD MAGILL,
*MAGILL GRAIN STORE, 08 8331 8159

MAKING A DIFFERENCE SO SOUTH AUSTRALIA THRIVES
Government of South Australia

COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS OFFICER

Department for Correctional Services
Coober Pedy Community Correctional Centre
Ongoing
Vac No: 835895
\$67,589 - \$72,033 pa (OPS3)

For more information and how to apply visit: www.iworkfor.sa.gov.au

Applications close: 11pm, 10 March 2026

IWORKFOR.SA.gov.au

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

WHEN TO CALL 000
Is your situation life-threatening due to any of the below?
• All fires, including bushfire and house fire
• Dangerous or life-threatening situations - Police
• Health & Medical - Ambulance
• Major gas leaks
• Accidents where there is fire or the need for medical assistance

WHEN TO CALL 132 500 (SES)
Flood or storm assistance:
• Serious damage to home
• Property at risk of flooding
• Tree fallen on car or home

NON-EMERGENCY CONTACTS
Often situations that seem urgent and overwhelming can be dealt with using local services such as a handyman, arborist or local council.
For non-urgent situations visit ses.sa.gov.au or refer to the following numbers:

SES Infoline 1800 362 361	Roads and traffic Accidents resulting in a traffic hazard 131 444	SA Water Burst water mains 1300 650 950	Health & medical Health Direct - free health advice from trained clinicians 1800 022 222
Police Non-urgent matters 131 444	Major arterial roads (dangerous conditions, road hazards and signal faults) 1800 018 313	Sewer blockage or overflow 1300 883 121	Mental health emergencies 13 14 65
Crime Stoppers (report crime anonymously) 1800 333 000	Local Councils (Fallen trees on local roads, footpaths and parks) lga.sa.gov.au/councils	Gas leaks 1800 GAS LEAK 1800 427 532	Poisons information 13 11 26
	Electricity Power network faults and emergencies, including loss of supply 13 13 66		

CALL 000 in an EMERGENCY
131 444 POLICE ASSISTANCE

DISCLAIMER

- Opinions, letters, and Public notices 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 editor of refuse copy in accordance with newspaper Policies.
- Due to concerns of bureaucratic victimisation, and allegation of bullying, community members may use a pen name, providing full name and details are provided to the Editor.

COOBER PEDY REGIONAL TIMES

Display EGN \$6.75 pcm/pcol (7 col)
Classi \$8.35 pcm/pcol (4 col)
editor@cooberpedytimes.com
Tel: 08 86725920

WEDNESDAY

Cfs Training

CFS TRAINING WEDNESDAY EVENING - 6PM at STATION.

Mine Rescue/SES

1st Wednesday of the month 7.30pm, and 2nd & 4th Saturday of the month 9am at Mine Rescue shed

FRIDAYS

CP Shooters Club

See back page for latest program



Italian Club

Italian Club Cooper Pedy is open April - December Thursday 5-10pm and Friday nights 5 - 1a m.



Greek Charcoal BBQ

Friday nights at the Greek Hall.

Alcoholics Anonymous

Meet Fridays 7pm at the side of the Catholic Church. If you have a drink ing problem and need help. Call 1800222222, Or call Dave on 0409349753

SATURDAYS

parkrun

8am Saturday mornings Town Oval

KIDS CHURCH/CLUB
Catacomb Anglican Church
 Every Sunday at 10 am (40 mins) - church starts at 9:30 am



GOLF 8.30 am

MINE RESCUE/SES

2nd & 4th Saturday of the month 9am

CP SHOOTERS CLUB

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



CROATION CLUB

Happy Hour 6-7pm

SUNDAYS

CP SHOOTERS CLUB

See BACK PAGE for latest updates Ring John DiDonna on 0427649389

COOPER PEDY RSL

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

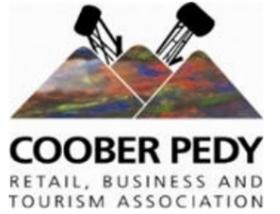
March 2026

In March 2026, outback South Australia features unique regional events including the Adelaide Fringe performances in the Flinders Ranges (Feb 20–Mar 22), and Cooper Pedy on March 4th. The Flinders Ranges Heritage Trail launch in Beltana on March 21.

Streaky Sounds Music Festival (March 8, 2026): A free, family-friendly music event held at the Streaky Bay Oval.

Riverland Food and Wine Festival (March 7, 2026): Held at Riverview Drive in Berri from 12 pm to 8 pm.

Flinders Ranges Heritage Trail Launch (March 21, 2026): A new, immersive experience launching in Beltana to showcase local history.



YEAR ROUND ATTRACTIONS & ACTIVITIES

Opal Shops: Visitors can explore Cooper Pedy's the large variety of Opal Shops at their leisure.

Underground Living: Experience the unique "dugout" homes, underground churches (such as the Serbian Orthodox Church, and Catacomb Church), and art galleries.

Opal Mining History: Tour the Umoona Opal Mine & Museum or the Old Timers Mine to learn about the town's history and see opal displays.

"Noodling": Try your luck at finding your own opals by "noodling" (fossicking) through permitted mine areas; you can inquire at the Visitor Centre for guidance.

Natural Landscapes: Visit the Kanku-Breakaways Conservation Park, about 33km north of town, which offers stunning views, especially at sunrise and sunset. The Moon Plain and the Dingo Fence are also nearby sights.

Unique Local Spots: Other points of interest include the Cooper Pedy Golf Course

Josephine's Gallery and Kangaroo Orphanage, and the Cooper Pedy Drive-In

Accommodation: Stay in an underground motel, or at an underground campground

COOPER PEDY DRIVE-IN THEATRE

Cooper Pedy Drive In

March Movies

7th - Zootopia 2

21st - The Housemaid

25th - David (sponsored community event)

28th - Mercy

Gate and Movie times TBA

No walk ins under 16 unless accompanied by guardian

Children to be supervised at ALL times



Car \$30 (2-7people), Adult \$15, student/ concession \$10, child \$5

ASSOCIATIONS

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 Tjitji 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 & Tourism Assoc. Inc

Committee Elected for 2026
 President: George Kountouris
 Vice President: George Russell OAM
 Treasurer: Nick Brellas
 Secretary/Public Officer: Nicky Kountouris Committee
 Members: Irene Spillman, Michael Farkas, Sean Harrison

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

Coober Pedy Sports & Rec Assoc. Inc

Jordan Riessen- Chairperson
 Gwen Martin - Treasurer
 Gwen Martin - Secretary
 Jon Fatt-Clifton - 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 2025/2026 President
 Daniel Lamb
 Senior Vice President Stephen Scott
 Junior Vice President John McDermott Secretary
 John Di Donna
 Treasurer Suzanne Bunker
 Public Relations Greg Sparrow

Committee Members
 Robert Gigos; CharissaLamb; Phil Gerschwitz;
 Jesse Manfred
Contact Secretary: 0427 649 389

Coober Pedy RSL Sub-Branch

President: Rod Hagel
 Vice President: Mick Cox
 Secretary: Kingsley Kammermann
 Treasurer: Miriam Kammermann
 Committee Members:

Rayleen Hagel
 Roz Jazepczyk
 Michael Stocks

CooberPedyRSL,
 Edward Street COOBERPEDY SA 5723
 Email: CooberPedy@rslsa.org.au

Coober Pedy Historical Society Inc

Committee Elected 20/10/2025
 Chairperson: Trish Turner
 Secretary: Jenny Davison
 Treasurer: Sue Britt
 Public Officer: Judy Harper
Contact: cooberpedyhs@gmail.com

DUSTY RADIO INC

Committee 2025
Chairperson
 Secretary: Patsy Anne Noble
 Treasurer:
 Public Officer: Patsy Anne Noble
 Social Media Officer:
 Committee member:
 Committee member:
<https://www.dustyradio.com.au/>



COOBER PEDY MINERS ASSOC.

Coober Pedy SA 3723
Committee Elected for 2025/26
 President: Matt Graham,
 Secretary:
 Treasurer: Nicko Farantouris
Committee Members: Rod Wells, Mish Blanusa,
 Mike Eakins, Steve Perkins,
 Lachlan Blanchford, Bailey Stevens

Coober Pedy Opal Fields Golf Club Inc.

Coober Pedy SA 3723
Committee Elected for 2025
 Club Captain: Stephen Borrett
 President: Chevahn Hoad
 Vice President: Miro Markovic
 Secretary: Nadine Lewis
 Treasurer: Father Paul Crotty
 Grounds Keeper: Dylan Lewis
 Bar Manager: Stephen Borrett
 Committee Members: Sue Britt, Bob Martin
Contact: cooberpedygolfclub@gmail.com

Coober Pedy Area School Governing Council

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**
 LiaPantelis, YukoCastles, MarzenaMazurkiewicz,
 DonnaClements, SarahRethus.

Elected Community Members : Amber McDonald;
 Maria Brellas; Gary Herdegen DCCP
 We are currently waiting on our
 representatives from the Umoona Community

Outback Open Air Cinema Inc (Coober Pedy Drive In) 2025

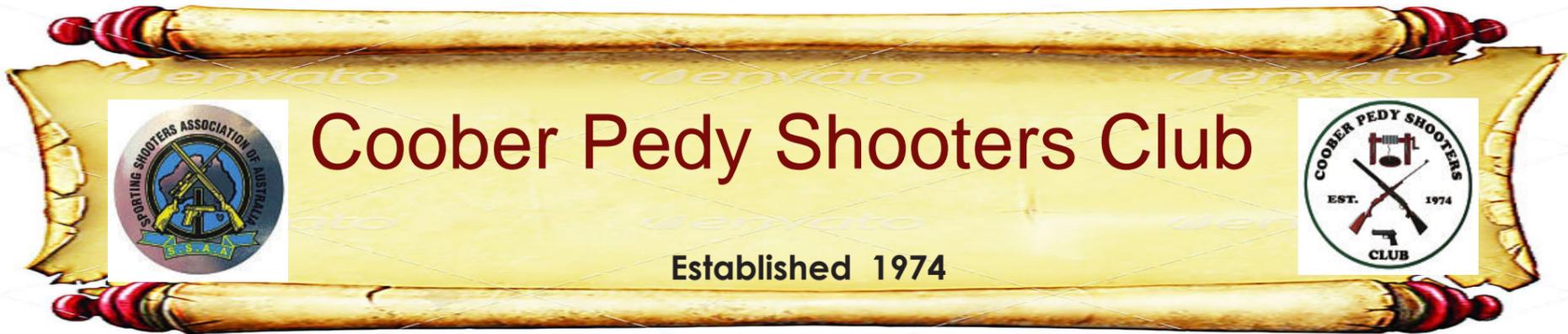
Chantelle Bamford Chairperson
 Lyndal Price Deputy Chairperson
 Tanya Lauder Secretary/Treasurer
 Gemma Hoad- Committee member
 Mitchell Hoad - Committee member
 Clydine Carboni - Committee Member
 Kaysy Clet de Leon-Committee member
 Gary Herdegen (Council) Committee Member
<http://www.cooberpedydrivein.org.au/documents.html>

Coober Pedy Italian Club Inc

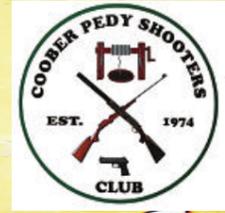
Committee Elected 18/10/2025
 Brett Smith President,
 Nicko Farantouris Vice Pres
 Deanna Smith Secretary,
 Cat Bell (Treasurer)
 Tara Jane Smith,
 Izzy Zelenko,
 Nick Farantouris (Jr)
 Karen Harvey,
 Rosslyn Jazepczyk;
 Peter Cech,
 Mitchell Rosewarne

Coober Pedy GEM TRADE SHOW

Committee Elected 18-12-2024
 President - Corey Edwards
 Secretary - Tara-Jane Smith
 Treasurer – Emily Pennisi
Committee members
 Catherine Bell,
 Rachel Crothers,
 David Hammermeister



Coober Pedy Shooters 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 (Military)

<i>7 February</i>
<i>14 February</i>
<i>21 February</i>
<i>28 February</i>
<i>7 March</i>

DISCIPLINES INCLUDE:

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

Coober Pedy Shooter's Club supports:

- ◆ Darts
- ◆ Archery

Starting Time: 9:00 AM

Sundays Rapid Fire 50m Benchrest Match

<i>8 February</i>
<i>15 February</i>
<i>22 February</i>
<i>1 March</i>
<i>8 March</i>

MEMBERSHIP Renewal Now Due 2026

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



The Coober Pedy Shooter's Club is affiliated with the Sporting Shooters Association of Australia (South Australia) Incorporated.
<https://ssaasa.org.au>