Review of reporting and compliance burdens on Local Government

Based on IPART’s Issues Paper – Review of reporting and compliance burdens on Local Government
July 2015

The Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) has started a review to identify inefficient or unnecessary planning, reporting and compliance obligations imposed on councils by the NSW Government. We have been asked to examine how the State regulates local government and to develop options to reduce, remove or streamline these obligations.

This fact sheet provides information about our review, including what we have been asked to do and our review process and timetable. It also outlines how stakeholders can participate and provide input to our review.

1 What have we been asked to do?

Our Terms of Reference ask us to:

- identify inefficient or unnecessary planning, reporting and compliance obligations imposed on councils by the NSW Government through legislation, policies or other means
- develop options to improve the efficiency of local government by reducing, removing or streamlining the planning, reporting and compliance obligations on councils, and
- collect evidence to establish the impacts on councils of reporting and compliance burdens, and to substantiate recommendations for reform.

Matters considered by IPART in its 2014 Local government compliance and enforcement review related to burdens placed on businesses and the community are outside the scope of this review.
IPART’S REVIEW
Reporting and compliance burdens on Local Government

**IS...**
To review the planning, reporting and compliance obligations placed on councils by the State that are specific to councils, to identify burdens and develop options for reform.

To also review these obligations where councils are, in effect, acting as an agent for the State.

**ISN’T...**
To review planning, reporting and compliance obligations placed on councils that are also placed on any business or private entity undertaking the same activity.

2 How will we conduct the review?

For this review, we will undertake consultation with relevant stakeholders, including councils and NSW Government agencies. We will also consult with the Fit for the Future Ministerial Advisory Group.

Our Issues Paper identifies the key issues on which we seek stakeholder comment. We will release a Draft Report with draft recommendations in early January 2016, seeking further submissions before providing a Final Report to the Minister for Local Government by 22 April 2016.

Table 2.1 sets out the indicative timetable for the review. We will update this timetable on our website as the review progresses.
Table 2.1 Proposed timetable for the review

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information request to NSW Government agencies sent</td>
<td>29 May 2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>Information request to NSW Government agencies due</td>
<td>30 June 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Release of Issues Paper and council questionnaire</td>
<td>13 July 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stakeholder submissions and council questionnaires due</td>
<td>14 August 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshops with councils and NSW Government agencies</td>
<td>1-25 September 2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public hearing</td>
<td>Early February 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stakeholder submissions due</td>
<td>Mid-February 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Report to Minister for Local Government</td>
<td>22 April 2016</td>
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Note: These dates are indicative and may be subject to change.

3 How can you have your say?

The outcomes of this review depend on the level of engagement by stakeholders. We therefore invite all interested parties, in particular councils, their industry representatives and NSW Government agencies to make written submissions in response to our Issues Paper by 14 August 2015.

In general terms we are seeking comment on:

- What planning, reporting or compliance obligations imposed specifically on councils by NSW Government agencies are creating unnecessary or excessive burdens?
- What are the impacts on councils of these planning, reporting or compliance obligations?
- How could these planning, reporting or compliance burdens be removed or reduced?

Specific questions to which we are seeking responses are listed in the Issues Paper. Submissions may also comment on any other issues stakeholders consider relevant to the review.

In addition to the Issues Paper, we have sought information from NSW Government agencies through a formal information request and from councils through a council questionnaire.

We plan to hold a public hearing in early February 2016 to give stakeholders an opportunity to provide input on our draft recommendations. Further details will be made available on our website.