

Collaborating Councils

Engineering Standards

Improving the way local councils buy goods and services to support their communities increases capacity and performance and provides better value for residents and ratepayers.

In 2006, three regional councils collaborated to develop a common infrastructure design manual for engineering standards.

Participating councils

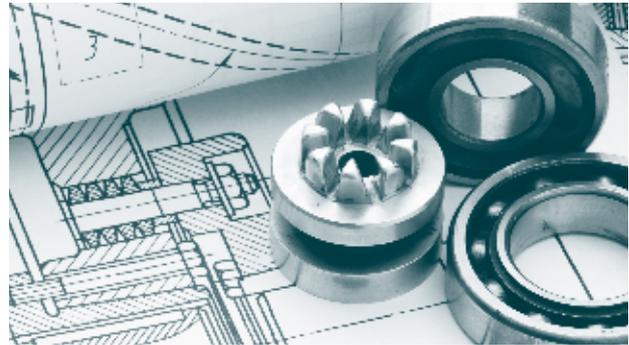
- **Campaspe Shire Council**
- **Greater Bendigo City Council**
- **Greater Shepparton City Council**

Recognising the benefits of such collaboration, Local Government Victoria supported these collaborating councils by setting up a governance structure that allowed the expansion of the common infrastructure design manual to include more councils across the State. The manual outlines specifications for various local infrastructure such as roads, drains, paths, kerbs and channels and community buildings.

Process

The common engineering standards were council-led, council-driven and are now council-owned and funded. The *Infrastructure Design Manual for Rural and Regional Councils* is now governed by an incorporated association with 43 paying Victorian council members.

An executive officer is employed to maintain the standards and the association also collaborates with industry representatives such as the Urban Development Institute of Australia.



In March 2016, these standards were also adopted by several South Australian local governments under a Creative Commons licence.

Benefits

- Councils share costs and risks in updating and maintaining standards.
- There is collective periodic review and continued improvement of the standards.
- The robust standards provide a strong defence at the Victorian Civil Appeals Tribunal.
- Shared ideas and systems allow for better practice across councils.
- There is greater opportunity for cross-council collaboration, skills sharing and training.
- The standards provide consistency while being flexible enough to address a range of design scenarios from coastal environments to steep hillside developments.
- The project has driven consistency and better practice in design and engineering standards across the state (and recently interstate).
- Industry also experiences reduced costs and increased consistency.

Read about the success and benefits of collaborative procurement at Local Government Victoria's website www.delwp.vic.gov.au/local-government/strengthening-councils/collaborating-councils.

For more information regarding this project contact Local Government Victoria on (03) 9948 8537.

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