



NORTHERN TERRITORY OF AUSTRALIA REMUNERATION TRIBUNAL

*Assembly Members and Statutory Officers
(Remuneration and Other Entitlements) Act 2006*

DETERMINATION OF ALLOWANCES FOR MEMBERS OF LOCAL COUNCILS

REPORT ON DETERMINATION NO. 1 OF 2025

1. INTRODUCTION

On 30 July 2024, pursuant to section 7B(1) of the *Assembly Members and Statutory Officers (Remuneration and Other Entitlements) Act 2006* (AMSORE Act), His Honour Professor the Honourable Hugh Heggie AO PSM, Administrator of the Northern Territory, issued a request to the Remuneration Tribunal (the Tribunal) to inquire into and determine the allowance or allowances payable to a member of a local council.

The resulting Report and Determination must be tabled in the Legislative Assembly within six sitting days of receipt by the Minister.

Under section 7B(7) of the AMSORE Act, the allowances determined are effective from either:

- the next financial year if the report is made on or before 1 February; or
- from the financial year after the next financial year if the report is made after 1 February.

On 6 September 2024, individual letters were sent to each Council inviting submissions and offered to hold a discussion with each Council either in person or through a video link. On 14 September 2024, an advertisement was placed in the NT News to announce the inquiry and invite submissions.

Further correspondence invited Councils to arrange to meet with the Tribunal and two meetings were held with Councils.

The Tribunal received eight submissions from the following Councils as well as Local Government Association of the Northern Territory (LGANT):

- Three from the City of Darwin Council
- City of Palmerston Council
- Alice Springs Town Council
- Two from the Wagait Shire Council
- Coomalie Shire Council

2. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ALLOWANCE

The Tribunal received several submissions requesting an increase to Professional Development Allowance. It is noted that the Professional Development Allowance is all inclusive and can include travel and accommodation costs. The Tribunal is aware of significant cost increases for travel especially for Regional areas of the NT and has agreed to increase the Allowance to \$5000 per financial year.

3. COUNCILLOR'S ALLOWANCE

The Tribunal has increased all base allowances by 4% in recognition of movements in earnings within Australia as well as the Territory.

At the same time, the Tribunal has determined that Elected Councillors in Wagait and Belyuen Shire Councils will receive the same base allowance as Elected Councillors in Coomalie

4. MAYOR AND PRINCIPAL MEMBER ALLOWANCE

The Tribunal has determined that on the basis of equity, the three Shire Council Mayors should receive the same Total Mayor Allowance which has now been set at \$30 462.

The Tribunal has also increased the Mayoral Allowance by 4% to address relativities between Councillor and Mayoral Allowances.

5. EXTRA MEETING / ACTIVITY ALLOWANCE

The Tribunal has kept the Allowance at a maximum of \$10 000, but has recognised some instances where the extra meeting allowance paid to a Councillor should not be applied to the cap.

The Tribunal has determined that where a Councillor is asked to represent the Mayor or Principal Member at an official Council function, an extra meeting allowance will apply, but it will not be included against the cap. Similarly, where Councillors meet with the Remuneration Tribunal, an extra meeting allowance will apply, but it will not be included against the cap.

The Tribunal has also determined that where a Councillor attends the Executive Board of the Local Government Association of NT (LGANT), an extra meeting allowance will apply, but it will not be included in the cap.

6. FUTURE INQUIRIES

This is the third inquiry into Members of Local Government Council Allowances by the Tribunal and it has been useful for the Tribunal to address some factors that were outstanding from earlier Inquiries.

The Tribunal believes that there are still some outstanding issues that need addressing and these would be enhanced by further Inquiries on an annual basis. .

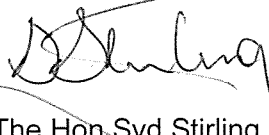
The Tribunal appreciates the feedback received from Councils.

7. APPENDIX A

Appendix A provides details of the allowances.



Mr Michael Martin OAM
Chairperson
Remuneration Tribunal



The Hon Syd Stirling AM
Member
Remuneration Tribunal



Mr Gary Higgins
Member
Remuneration Tribunal

Dated 10 December 2024

Comparison of Existing Allowances with New Allowances**Municipal and Regional Councils**

ALLOWANCE COUNCIL	CURRENT	New from 1 July 2025
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Councillors

Darwin	\$31,775	\$33,046
Palmerston	\$24,600	\$25,584
Alice Springs	\$22,550	\$23,452
Litchfield	\$22,550	\$23,452
Katherine & Regional	\$20,500	\$21,320

Shire Councils

Councillors	Coomalie	\$7,175	\$7,462
	Belyuen	up to \$5,125	\$7,462
	Wagait	up to \$5,125	\$7,462

Mayor Allowance

Darwin	\$127,200	\$132,288
Palmerston	\$92,000	\$95,680
Alice Springs	\$89,000	\$92,560
Litchfield	\$83,000	\$86,320
Katherine & Regional	\$82,000	\$85,280

Total Mayoral Allowance

Darwin	\$158,975	\$165,334
Palmerston	\$116,600	\$121,264
Alice Springs	\$111,550	\$116,112
Litchfield	\$105,550	\$109,772
Katherine & Regional	\$102,000	\$106,600
Shire Councils	\$30,175	\$30,462

Deputy Mayor Total allowance

Darwin	\$55,575	\$56,846
Palmerston	\$41,800	\$42,784
Alice Springs	\$39,050	\$39,952
Litchfield	\$38,550	\$39,452
Katherine & Regional	\$36,500	\$37,320

Shire Councils

Mayor	Coomalie	\$30,175	\$30 462
	Belyuen to	up to \$25,125	\$30 462
	Wagait	up to \$25,125	\$30 462



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DETERMINATION OF ALLOWANCES FOR MEMBERS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCILS

DETERMINATION NO. 1 OF 2025

Under section 7B of the *Assembly Members and Statutory Officers (Remuneration and Other Entitlements) Act 2006*, the Tribunal determines as follows:

1. DEFINITIONS

Municipal Councils are the following:

- Alice Springs;
- Darwin;
- Katherine;
- Litchfield; and
- Palmerston.

Regional Councils are the following:

- Barkly;
- Central Desert;
- East Arnhem;
- MacDonnell;
- Roper Gulf;
- Tiwi Islands
- West Arnhem;
- West Daly; and
- Victoria Daly.

Shire Councils are the following:

- Belyuen;
- Coomalie; and
- Wagait.

New Councils: any other Councils newly constituted by the Minister for Local Government in 2025

Financial Year is the period from 1 July to the 30 June.

Councils are defined in the *Local Government Act 2019* as an area, and means the Local Council constituted for that area under section 14(b).

The role of Mayor is defined in section 58 of the *Local Government Act 2019* and is prescribed as:

- (1) The Principal Member of a municipal council is to have the title Mayor.
- (2) However:
 - (a) in the case of the council for the City of Darwin local government area – the principal member is to have the title Lord Mayor; and
 - (b) in the case of the Litchfield Council – the council may, by resolution, decide the principal member instead has the title President.
- (3) The Council may, by resolution, decide the principal member of a regional or shire council has the title Mayor or President.

Deputy Mayor is defined in the *Local Government Act 2019*.

Councillor is a member of a Local Council:

2. ALLOWANCES

The following annual allowances will apply from 1 July 2025 and will be paid fortnightly or monthly:

COUNCILLORS' ALLOWANCE

Darwin	\$33,046
Palmerston	\$25,584
Alice Springs	\$23,452
Litchfield	\$23,452
Other Municipal and Regional	\$21,320

Shire Councils

Coomalie	\$7,462
Belyuen	\$7,462
Wagait	\$7,462

DEPUTY PRINCIPAL MEMBERS ADDITIONAL ALLOWANCE

Darwin	\$23,800
Palmerston	\$17,200
Alice Springs	\$16,500
Litchfield	\$16,000
Other Municipal and Regional	\$16,000

PRINCIPAL MEMBERS ADDITIONAL ALLOWANCE

Darwin	\$132,288
Palmerston	\$95,680
Alice Springs	\$92,560
Litchfield	\$86,320
Other Municipal and Regional	\$85,280

Shire Councils

Coomalie	\$23,000
Belyuen	\$23,000
Wagait	\$23,000

3. INCLUSIONS OF ALL ALLOWANCES

The Allowances are to cover:

- any cost to Councillors of attending meetings and activities of Council where these costs are not reimbursed by Council;
- contribution towards phone and internet usage;
- contribution towards any home office and supplies; and
- allowance towards costs incurred in servicing constituents in Ward or Council Area:
 - Including, but not limited to:
 - donations;
 - organization sponsorship;
 - membership fees;
 - patron expenses; and
 - constituent support.

4. EXTRA MEETING / ACTIVITY ALLOWANCE

4.1. An Extra Meeting / Activity Allowance of up to \$10,000 per financial year, may be accessed by all Councillors and Deputy Principal Members. The allowance may be accessed as follows:

- special meetings of full Council or established committees of Council;
- attendance at Local Authority Meetings within the Ward the member represents;
- attendance at any functions representing the Principal Member on official Council duties;
- attendance at functions/meetings as an invited representative of Council and with Council's approval; and
- attendance at any approved extra meetings of Council for planning, briefing or information sessions of council meetings.

The activity allowance may be paid as travel time when travelling to Council meetings and meetings of Local Authorities within the ward the Councillor represents, where the travel involves at least 50kms from home base (at least 100kms return). This activity Allowance is not to be included in the cap of \$10 000.

4.2. Allowances to be paid to eligible members (not including Principal Members) are:

- Fee for attendance at extra meetings or activities is the accumulated hours on any one day and are as follow:
 - up to 2 hours \$200
 - between 2 and 4 hours \$300
 - more than 4 hours \$500 (maximum payable for any one day)

4.3 Where a Councillor receives extra meeting allowance to represent the Mayor or Principal member at an official Council function, that extra meeting allowance will not be applied to the cap. Where Councillors meet with the Remuneration Tribunal, an extra meeting allowance will be paid, and that extra meeting allowance will not be applied to the cap.

- 4.4 Where a Councillor attends the Executive Board of the Local Government Association of NT (LGANT) and receives an extra meeting allowance, that extra meeting allowance will not be applied to the cap.

5. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ALLOWANCE

- 5.1. Professional Development Allowance is \$5000 per person, per financial year and will be paid to all Principal Members, Deputy Principal Members and Councillors.
- 5.2. The Professional Development Allowance is an inclusive allowance which covers costs associated with the Professional Development activities including registration and attendance fees, travel cost including vehicle allowance, travel allowances and travel time as specified in clause 4.2.
- 5.3. Any course or professional development activity must be specifically related to the role of the Councillor and be approved by the Council. The Australian Institute of Company Directors' Courses should be encouraged, as well as professional development activity that is arranged by the Local Government Association of Northern Territory.
- 5.4. Total amount claimable each year is the total of two years, being based on an annual allowance, plus one year drawn in advance or one year's remaining balance from a previous year. The maximum amount claimable by any Councillor is the total sum of one year for each year of the Councillor's elected term.
- 5.5. Proof of completion for each stage of the course is required before further payments can be claimed.

6. VEHICLE ALLOWANCE

- 6.1. Vehicle Allowance will be available for travel undertaken by all Councillors when the travel:
- (a) exceeds 50kms from home base 100kms return,
 - (b) travel does not occur in a Council supplied and maintained vehicle;
 - (c) the Councillor is not in receipt of a motor vehicle allowance in Clause 7 below; and
 - (d) the vehicle allowance is capped at \$10,000.
- 6.2. Vehicle Allowance will be in the form of kilometre allowance which will be paid at rates set by the Australian Taxation Office.
- 6.3. Vehicle Allowance will be available in the following circumstances:
- travel to and from statutory Council meetings;
 - travel to and from official Council approved meeting;
 - travel to and from approved functions representing the Principal Member;
 - travel to and from Local Authority Meetings within the ward the Councillor represents.
 - travel to and from all meetings of Council and their committees; and
 - travel to and from any additional activity where Extra Meeting/Activity Allowance has been approved.
- 6.4. When a kilometre reimbursement is paid, travel time will also be paid utilising extra meetings/activities rate. This payment is not to be included in the extra meetings/activities cap as specified in Clause 4.1.

6.5. The Vehicle Allowance Cap will not include:

- travel to and from Local Authorities Meetings within the Ward that the member represents;
- travel involved with Professional Development activities.

7. PROVISION OF MOTOR VEHICLE

7.1. Principal Members of Municipal and Regional Councils are entitled to a Council maintained vehicle.

7.2. If Principal Members of Municipal and Regional Councils choose not to be provided with a Council maintained vehicle, they are entitled to Motor Vehicle Allowance, paid fortnightly or monthly, and will be:

- \$25,000 per year for Municipal Principal Members; or
- \$40,000 per year for Regional Principal Members.

7.3 The Principal members of the Shire Councils may claim reimbursement in accordance with Clause 6.1.

8. TRAVEL ALLOWANCE

8.1 Principal Members, Deputy Principal Members and Councillors who are required to stay away from home overnight on approved Council business, will be entitled to Travel Allowance.

8.2 The applicable rates to be paid are found in Table 1 of [Taxation Determination TD 2024/3](#) or any subsequent Taxation Determination made in substitution of that Determination.

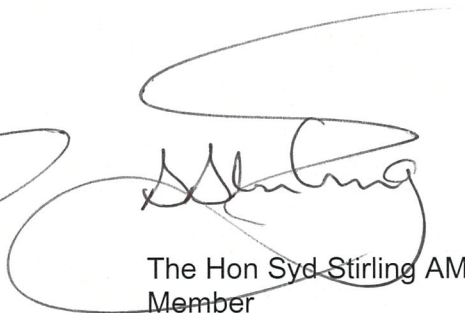
9. GENERAL

9.1. Pursuant to section 7B(7) of the *Assembly Members and Statutory Officers (Remuneration and Other Entitlements) Act 2006*, the allowances determined are effective from either:

- the next financial year if the report is made on or before 1 February; or
- from the financial year after the next financial year if the report is made after 1 February.



Mr Michael Martin OAM
Chairperson
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Dated 10 December 2024