



THE HON SIMON CREAN MP

**Minister for Regional Australia, Regional Development and Local Government
Minister for the Arts**

ALGA MAIL

ITEM No:

DATE RECEIVED:

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02 MAY 20

Councillor Genia McCaffery
President
Australian Local Government Association
8 Geils Court
DEAKIN ACT 2600

Dear Councillor *Genia* McCaffery

I refer to the letter of 1 October 2010 from your predecessor, Councillor Geoff Lake, seeking Australian Government responses on certain resolutions that arose from the National General Assembly for Local Government 2010. I apologise for the delay in replying.

The resolutions are as follows:

- the funding and support by state and federal governments of the Early Years, part of the National Quality Framework (Strategic Motion No: 21 from the City of Boroondara, Victoria);
- calls for the Australian Government to broker a tripartite government approach for protocols relating to access to libraries and multipurpose halls as per the Building the Education Revolution Guideline (Motion No: 27.3 from Redland City, Queensland); and
- the proposed establishment of an independent national authority to develop regulations and manage the safe removal and disposal of asbestos (Motion No: Reserved: 66 from Holroyd City Council, Queensland).

As the above matters fall within my portfolio responsibilities as Minister for Regional Australia, Regional Development and Local Government, I have coordinated a Government response to the resolutions. Attached are the responses which have been provided by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.

Thank you for raising this matter.

Yours sincerely


SIMON CREAN

Encl.

ALGA 2010 NATIONAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTIONS AND AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT RESPONSES

Strategic Motion No. 21: Prior to progressing the reforms currently committed by COAG in relation to the Early Years, the National General Assembly called for further assessment and research to be undertaken to ensure that the implementation of reforms can be fully funded and supported by the State and Federal Governments, to ensure that access by families to early years services is not compromised and that no cost shifting occurs.

The Australian Government's Response

Under the National Quality Framework, the states and territories will have primary responsibility for approval, monitoring and quality assessment of education and care services. The National Partnership Agreement on the National Quality Agenda for Early Childhood Education and Care is based on a shared investment approach between the Australian Government, states and territories. It sets out the total Australian Government funding allocation of \$61.27 million to the states and territories from 2010/11 to 2013/14 under the Agreement. It is important to note that the changes will be put in place over a number of years and services will have time to adjust. There should be no sudden increase in costs to families.

Motion No. 27/3: That this National General Assembly calls for the Federal Government to broker a tripartite agreement between federal, state and local governments for the development of protocols on the provision of community access to libraries and multipurpose halls as per the Building the Education Revolution Guidelines.

The Australian Government's Response

The Building the Education Revolution (BER) Guidelines stipulate that the school must agree to provide access at no, or low cost community access to BER funded multipurpose halls and libraries in state, Catholic and independent schools. Fees to cover the cost of providing access can be charged (DEEWR September 2010 advice). The Government believes that the Guidelines provide sufficient advice to schools regarding community access to their facilities.

Motion No. 66 (reserved): In recognition of the dangers to public health from asbestos, the National General Assembly calls upon the Australian Government as a matter of urgency to establish an independent national authority to develop regulations and to safely manage the safe removal and disposal of asbestos through local government and on an Australia wide basis.

The Australian Government's Response

The Australian Government is committed to ensuring that asbestos management arrangements in Australia minimise the risk of avoidable exposure to the Australian public. For this reason the Australian Government announced the Asbestos Management Review (the Review) in October 2010. The Review will look at current activities in the areas of asbestos management and will make practical recommendations for the development of a national strategic plan to improve asbestos awareness and management. The terms of reference for the Review include looking at the issue of safe removal and disposal of asbestos. The Review will deliver a comprehensive report to the Australian Government by 30 June 2012. The Chair of the Review, Mr Geoff Fary, will consult with interested parties including members of the Australian Government and state, territory and local governments throughout the process. This consultation will inform the recommendations for a long term, strategic approach to this important issue.