

# ANNUAL REPORT



**2003/2004**



## **DISTRICT COUNCIL OF COOBER PEDY**

**HUTCHISON STREET, COOBER PEDY**

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## **MAYOR'S ANNUAL REPORT**

I am pleased to present my first annual report as Mayor of the District Council of Coober Pedy. This year has been an extremely challenging one for all involved and sees changes to the Council following elections in May 2003. After the initial steep learning curve that was experienced by the new Councillors I am pleased to report that Council is now operating effectively and efficiently.

Council continues to consolidate its finances and reduce the deficit experienced due to the failure of the power station in late 2002. I am pleased to report that Council's financial plan to have a balanced budget and reduce its outstanding loan ratio by June 2005 remains on target. This is in the main due to the excellent work of the departmental managers in maintaining their budgets, and the Manager Finance and Administration in keeping a watchful eye on the financial integrity of Council.

This year saw Council tender and negotiate a contract for the long term generation of electricity to Coober Pedy. As a result, StateWest Power commenced construction of the new power station. Handover is scheduled for July 2004 and at present everything is on track and progressing as expected. The new power station will give the residents of Coober Pedy a continuous and sustainable supply of electricity, something not experienced for some time.

Council has agreed to once again continue to waive the head tax for Regional Express (Rex) in the 2004/2005 year due to the unprecedented success of the arrangement seen this year. Passenger numbers have increased by 60%



overall and increased numbers have resulted in the route being increased to a six day service. Council has also agreed to a route licence being issued to REX for the Coober Pedy/Adelaide route. Council is pleased that REX now sees this route as being viable, and that REX is now prepared to commit to the future of Coober Pedy and the air route.

Council resolved to progress the Visitor Information Centre by agreeing to build extensions to the existing Council offices in lieu of pursuing a stand alone building. Additional funding has been received from the South Australian Tourism Commission (SATC) allowing for the fit out of the new centre. The contract for the construction of the VIC has been awarded and construction should be complete by Christmas 2004.

Council stepped in and took over the management of the Mini Gems Child Care Centre in January 2004. The centre was facing the prospect of closure due to failing numbers and finances. I am pleased to report that the second half of this year has shown a steady growth in numbers and sessions, and due to the dedication shown by the child care centre staff

and the Manager of Finance, the centre is now running smoothly and on budget. This year also saw the introduction of a new position, Child Links Worker and I welcome Melissa Borrett to the position.



Child Care Links Worker Melissa Borrett and daughter Emma

Following discussions with Council's solicitor representing native title issues, instructions were given to progress the native title claim over the Breakaways Reserve. Consequently the matter was set down for hearing in Adelaide on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2004. It is hoped that as a result, agreement can be reached in relation to some of the concerns experienced at the Breakaways Reserve.

The year has, as usual, seen a number of staff changes. I wish the very best to those who have left Council's employ and thank them for their contribution. Special thanks to Kym Hunt, Stella Oppes, Trevor Peek and Brian Mooney, all of whom have left Coober Pedy to pursue their dreams elsewhere. Darren Zechner and James Fairfull have joined Council as part of the Works Department, while Damien Clark, Kathy Kiosses and Leah Henderson have joined the Administration and Tourism ranks.

A special thanks must go to Council's new Manager of Finance and Administration, Mr Damien Clark. Damien moved to Coober Pedy with wife Prudie and son Sebastian in July to take up his new position with Council. Since arriving Damien has proven to be an invaluable asset. Along with his copious supply of patience, his knowledge of finance and all things IT has proven to be of huge benefit to Council. Council's ever improving financial position is a result of Damien's hard work and dedication. I thank Damien sincerely for his efforts this past year.

My sincere thanks go to all employees of Council for the support and commitment they have shown to Councillors and myself this past year.

I look forward to once again facing the challenges that the next year has to offer. My Council and I will once again aim to exceed the expectations of the community in 2004/2005.

**Steve Baines JP**  
**Mayor**

## **CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S ANNUAL REPORT**

The District Council of Coober Pedy, with approximately 3,500 residents in its area and comprised of some 45 ethnic backgrounds, is strategically located roughly half way between Adelaide and Alice Springs, adjacent to the Stuart Highway (Highway 87). The Local Government area is only 77.6 square kilometres yet it has developed as a regional service centre in Outback South Australia, providing a base for many services often taken for granted in larger regional and metropolitan areas.

The economy of Coober Pedy, known nationally and internationally as the "Opal Capital of the World", is based upon the opal mining industry and the often un-predictable tourism industry.

Despite Council's comparatively low rate income base, it is committed to supporting these two industries that are so essential to the economic wellbeing of the community. The development of infrastructure and marketing opportunities are seen as crucial to the sustainability of both industries.

The 2003/2004 financial year saw Council continue with financial restraint in order to recover from the unbudgeted costs associated with renting hire generators and additional costs in bringing our own power station generators back on line to enable provision of electricity whilst the long term solution was implemented. The Mayor and senior staff, together with assistance from Energy SA, Treasury & Finance and the Local Government Association, completed protracted contractual negotiations with Western Australian company StateWest Power Pty Ltd, the successful tenderers for the



construction and operation of the new power station.

Construction commenced in early January 2004 with a projected commissioning date in July 2004. Council is very confident that StateWest Power Pty will provide a quality and sustainable delivery of electricity to Coober Pedy for the next 15 years.

Council was delighted in June of 2003 to appoint Mr Damien Clark as its new Manager Finance & Administration, and now with a full year under his belt, Damien has proven to be a very dedicated and productive member of Council's senior management team. It is no secret that his financial guidance, quality reporting and strict management of Council's accounts have been significant factors in reconsolidating our finances.

Council continues to be frustrated in its attempts to finalise the Plan Amendment Report with the public consultation completed at the end of the financial year. It is anticipated that during the latter half of the 2004 calendar year the PAR will be signed off by the Minister and it will then provide clear development guidelines for Coober Pedy.



The District Council of Coober Pedy continues to enjoy a strong working partnership with the Northern Regional Development Board (NRDB) and the Office of Regional Affairs through the Resource Agreement. Following the departure of Mr Trevor Peek in April 2004, a review of the delivery of economic development services was undertaken, the result of which will be discussed with the Minister during the Community Cabinet meeting in Coober Pedy in July 2004. Council is committed to maintaining these strong links with the NRDB and the Office of Regional Affairs and we look forward to future mutual and economically beneficial developments.



**New Power Station under construction**

Council is also a funding partner with the Northern Regional Development Board, Outback Areas Community Development Trust and the South Australian Tourism Commission in the employment by the NRDB of Mr Stephen Staines, Outback Tourism Product Development Officer based in Coober Pedy.

The South Australian Tourism Commission continues to provide strong support for Coober Pedy. No better example can be seen in its patience and provision of additional funds to ensure the development and upgrade of the existing Visitor Information Centre located within the Council administration building. This project is anticipated to commence

early July and be completed by the end of 2004.

Other issues of note that have developed during the year are as follows:

- Finalised all By-Laws
- Quarry tender finalised for provision of aggregate
- Funding secured for UHF repeater tower on the William Creek Road
- Swimming Pool insurance variation (cost saving of approx \$20,000)
- Funding commitment to the Outback Regional Recreation, Sport & Open Space Strategy
- Relocation of the Electricity Distribution team to the Works/Water Depot
- Council's ongoing partnership with Regional Express (Rex) to provide cheaper and affordable airfares (marked increase in passenger numbers for 2003/2004)

The District Council of Coober Pedy continues to undergo staff changes, which is an inevitable fact of life whilst living in such a remote community. I wish to publicly thank Mr Kym Hunt (former Works Manager) and Mr Brian Mooney (former Manager Electricity Supply) for their commitment to working with Council, at times under trying circumstances.



**Ms Lyn Freeman, Executive Assistant**

Council senior staff and Elected Members continue to enjoy an extremely productive relationship which I am confident will continue into the new financial year. With its continued focus on financial recovery and reconsolidation of finances, I believe Council will be well placed by the 2005/2006 financial year to be once again on the front foot.

With this in mind I echo the Mayor's comments that we look forward to once again facing the challenges that befall us as we aim to exceed the expectations of the community.

Mayor Steve Baines continues to provide strong leadership into 2004/2005 and I extend my thanks to him, Councillors, Senior Management and all staff for their support and effort during the year.

**Trevor McLeod**  
**Chief Executive Officer**

# **WHAT IS COUNCIL AND WHAT DOES IT DO?**

## **Council's role is to:**

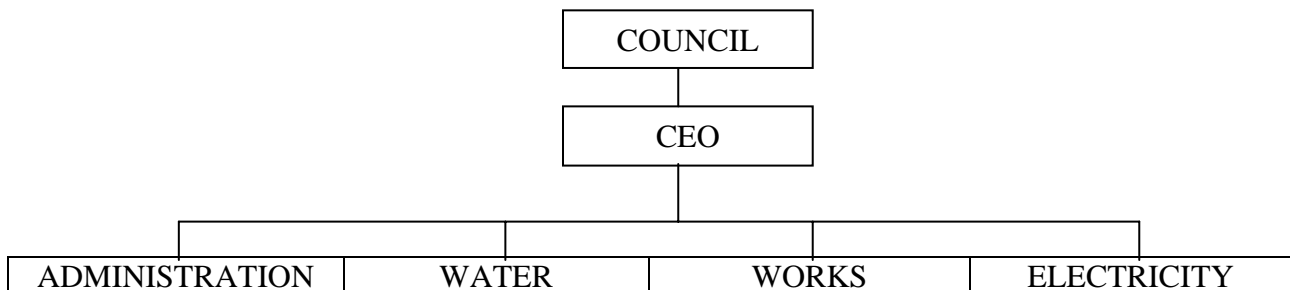
- Provide public services in a fair and equitable manner
- Make decisions on behalf of the community
- Promote and co-ordinate local effort
- Represent the community to other governments
- Manage Council's facilities and resources effectively and efficiently
- Encourage community participation in all aspects of Local Government
- Exercise and perform the powers, functions and duties of Local Government as required by the Local Government Act

## **COUNCIL STRUCTURE**

Council consists of the Mayor and eight (8) Councillors. Following the resignation of Councillor Ian Quartermain in June 2003, this Council has, in accordance with the Local Government Act 1999, functioned without holding a supplementary election to fill his casual vacancy. It is the policy and decision making body.

The Chief Executive Officer has the responsibility of implementing and administering these policies and decisions through the use of Council's human, physical and financial resources.

The Council is divided into the four (4) departments of Administration, Works, Water and Electricity and is structured as shown below:



## **FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION**

### **Overview**

2003/04 can best be described as the District Council of Coober Pedy's year of consolidation. It was a year in which the whole of Council had to hold its collective breathe and hope that the power supply could remain operational and stable, and still not drain Council's funds.

This proved to be a challenge as Council had an unbudgeted Power Station engine overhaul to be performed in the first 3 months of the financial year. This engine proved to be invaluable in enabling Council to terminate the costly hire of rental generators from Adelaide.

The other major challenge for the year was the potential closure of the Mini Gems Childcare Centre. In August 2003 the centre's committee held a public meeting to let the community know that the centre had serious financial problems and they were likely to close. In January 2004 the District Council of Coober Pedy resolved to take over management and running of the centre.

Many thanks must go to parents, Minigems and Council staff who all facilitated a smooth transitional phase. The centre is now running very successfully.

As stated earlier, this was a year of consolidation with Council and management keeping a very tight hold on the reigns. Major expenses were incurred as and when necessary. This meant that some capital projects were delayed until necessary funds became available.



**Damien Clark, Finance & Administration Manager, and  
Michelle Riha, Human Resource Officer**

The Council figures at a glance:

Surplus before Depreciation: \$1,258,000

Depreciation: \$1,635,000

Deficit after Depreciation: \$ 376,000

Loan Balance @ 30/6/04 \$3,160,000

Cash Balance @ 30/6/04 \$ 545,000

Debtors Balance @ 30/6/04 \$ 529,000

Creditors Balance @ 30/6/04 \$ 640,000

It should be noted that in 2002/03 the deficit after depreciation was \$1,369,000.

As is evident Council was able to achieve a remarkable change and turnaround of nearly \$1,000,000 in 12 months.

Council and Managers must be congratulated for their restraint and commitment to achieving the above results.



## **Staff Changes**

Administration staff changes have fortunately been kept to a minimum, with only 3 changes during the year.

Mrs Stella Oppes left Council's employ in December after many years service and moved with her family to Adelaide. Many thanks must go to Stella for her service with Council and to the community.

Mrs Kathy Kiosses commenced employment with Council as the front counter reception officer.



**Receptionist Kathy Kiosses**

Mrs Melissa Borrett commenced employment with Council as a Child Care Links officer, a position that is funded for a period of 18 months.

## **Collection of Debts**

Collection of debts is proceeding well with a new system of letters and reminders being introduced following consultation with key service providers in town.

Council continues to investigate various options for payment of accounts, including use of the internet once Council's dedicated website is completed.

Council's use of a number of debt collection agencies is proving quite successful in the collection of outstanding accounts.

Payment of accounts can be quite stressful when they start adding up and Council encourages customers to make an appointment to work out a payment plan should they be experiencing financial problems.

## **Many thanks**

I extend my thanks to Elected Members for their commitment to consolidate Council's finances this year following the problems of the previous year.

Council's support and provision of feedback certainly assists in presenting the appropriate reports in a user friendly format.

Thanks must also go to Council's Senior Management for their diligence in adhering to tight budgetary controls and working with me in my role as Finance & Administration Manager

Finally I thank all staff under my supervision for the support provided they have shown me with my time here.

**Damien Clark**

**Finance & Administration Manager**

## COUNCIL MEETINGS

Ordinary meetings of Council are held monthly on the third Tuesday at 7.00p.m.

Members of the public are welcome to attend and speak to Council during the public consultation section of the meetings between 8.00 pm and 8.30 pm.

The agenda is placed on public display on the Friday preceding the meeting. Minutes are available for inspection by the Friday after the meeting.

## SERVICES FOR THE COMMUNITY

Full Council makes decisions on policy issues relating to services that are provided to the community. These services currently include –

- Road construction and maintenance
- Litter bins
- Traffic control devices
- Public toilets
- Public cemeteries
- School Community Library
- Child Care
- Tree planting
- Planning and Building control
- Rubbish disposal site
- Tourist Information
- Fire hydrant systems & fire protection through CFS
- Parks & reserves
- Water supply
- Community Hall
- Electricity supply
- Aged housing
- Aerodrome
- Dog control & impoundment
- Quarry products
- Parking control
- Recreational & sporting facilities

- Plant and equipment hire
- Street cleaning & lighting
- Support for community groups

Council is also required to carry out a number of policing services under various Acts, Regulations and By-Laws. These include control on –

- Environmental Health
- Land use
- Dogs
- Signs
- Land division
- Fire Hazards
- Traffic
- Buildings
- Litter
- Parking



Community Oval

Anyone contemplating undertaking property building development of any kind must obtain Council approval.

If you are unsure about a matter please phone Council by:

Phone: (08) 86 725 298,

Fax: (08) 86 725 699 or email at

[dccp@cpccouncil.sa.gov.au](mailto:dccp@cpccouncil.sa.gov.au)

# **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

## **Council Meetings:**

Members of the public have a number of opportunities to put forward their views on particular issues before Council. These are –

- **Deputations:**

With the permission of the Mayor a member of the public can address the Council personally or on behalf of a group of residents.

- **Presentation to Council:**

Between 8.00 pm & 8:30 pm at each general meeting of Council any member of the public can address the Council for five (5) minutes on any issues relevant to Council.

- **Petitions:**

Written petitions can be addressed to the Council on any issue within the Council's jurisdiction.

- **Written Requests:**

A member of the public can write to the Council on any Council policy, activity or service.

- **Elected Members:**

Members of the public can contact an Elected Member of Council to discuss any issue relevant to Council.

Council has adopted the following policies, codes and procedures that are also available for public inspection:

- Access to Council Meetings, Council Committees & Council Documents
- Elected Members' Allowances and Support Policy
- Elected Members' Code of Conduct
- Employees' Code of Conduct
- Internal Review of Council Decisions
- Making of Orders
- Public Consultation Policy
- Purchasing Policy
- Rating Policy
- Rate Rebate Policy
- Rates of Allowances for Members
- Register of Allowances and Benefits

# **GENERAL INFORMATION**

## **ACCESS TO DOCUMENTS**

Council has a policy of making all documents available for public inspection except for those that are of a personal nature, relate to matters affecting staff or require some type of contractual confidentiality.

The following documents are available for public inspection at the Council Offices, free of charge:

Council Meeting Agenda, Council Minutes, Council Budget, Annual Report including Annual Financial Statements, Council By-Laws, Plan Amendment Report, Supplementary Development Plan, Planning Application Register, Building Application Register, Register of Elected Members' Allowances & Benefits, Register of Employees' Salaries, Wages & Benefits, Register of Public Streets & Roads, Register of Fees & Charges Levied, Assessment Book & Property Records

Members of the public may purchase copies of these documents for a fee declared by Council during annual budget deliberations.

## **Requests for Other Information**

Requests for other information not included above will be considered in accordance with the Freedom of Information provisions of the Local Government Act. Under this legislation an application and a search fee must be forwarded unless the applicant is granted an exemption.

## **By-Laws**

The following Council By-Laws were enacted during the year and came into effect from 20<sup>th</sup> April 2003:

- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| <b>No.1</b> | <b>Permits and Penalties</b><br>To provide for a permit system and continuing penalties in council by-laws and to clarify the construction of such by-laws |
| <b>No.2</b> | <b>Moveable Signs</b><br>To set standards for moveable signs on streets and roads and to provide conditions for and the placement of such signs            |

- No. 3 Local Government Land**  
For the management and regulation of the use of and access to local government land vested in or under the control of council, including the prohibition and regulation of particular activities on local government land.
- No. 4 Roads**  
For the management, control and regulation of activities on roads.
- No. 5 Nuisances**  
To prevent and suppress certain kinds of nuisances in the town of Coober Pedy.
- No. 6 Dogs**  
For the control of dogs within the area, to limit the number of dogs kept in premises and to require dogs to be effectively secured.

### **Application of Competition Principles**

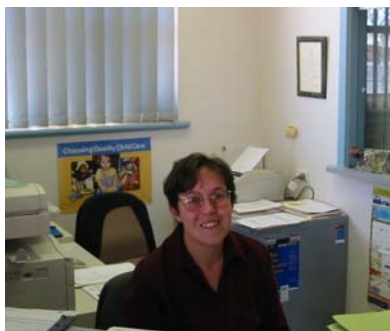
During 2003/2004, Council reviewed its policies and implemented new By-Laws. Particular attention was paid to the application of National Competition Policy and any possible restrictive aspects the by-laws and policies may have on competition.

Council has, in accordance with the Local Government Act 1999, adopted policies and procedures that govern tender and purchase practices for goods and service.

### **Mini Gems - A Real Success Story**



**Mini Gems Children's Centre**



**Director Rachel Underwood**



**Children at Mini Gems**



# HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

## *STAFFING OVERVIEW*

At the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2004 Council employed the following staff –

Function	Full-time	Casual	Part-time	TOTAL
Governance	2	0	0	2
Finance & Administration	6	0	1	7
Tourism	1	0	0	1
Works	11	2	0	13
Water Supply	4	0	0	4
Electricity Supply	5	2	0	7
Library	0	1	0	1
Pool	0	8	0	8
Childcare	0	6	2	8
Childcare Links	1	0	0	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>52</b>

Total salaries expense for the year ending the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2004 was \$2,030,191 which represents 19.81% of Council's total cash expenditure of \$10,245,779.

### STAFF TRAINING

Employee training and development is an investment. It can increase productivity by

- Increasing the skills of employees so that they are capable of operating more efficiently.
- Creating a safer workplace.
- Quickly and efficiently preparing employees to use new technology and deal with workplace changes.
- Increasing employee morale.

Council has delegated the responsibility of staff training to the Chief Executive Officer.



In the 2003/2004 year the following monies were spent on training:

Administration	\$ 5,316
Electricity	\$ 1,707
Works	\$ 19,921
Water	\$ 99
Tourism	\$ 4,454
Swimming Pool	\$ 476
Economic Development	\$ 123
Child Care Links	\$ 345
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>\$ 32,351</u></b>

A large percentage of the training was related to Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare issues.



**Diesel Mechanic Apprentice Alastair Falland**

## **EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY**

The goals of council's Equal Employment Opportunity Program are to:

- Ensure that all staff or potential employees receive fair and equitable treatment.
- Engage or promote staff on a proper assessment of merit without discriminatory bias based on sex, sexuality, marital status, pregnancy, race, physical impairment, intellectual impairment or age.
- Involve and consult with staff on work practices and workplace change.
- Employ staff with skills best suited to the provision of Local Government services to the community.
- Give all staff equal access to training.

## **WORKS DEPARTMENT**

### **Roads**

The District Council of Coober Pedy Works Department continues to maintain more than 300 km of roads in the mining and township areas. Grading of roads and driveways to all areas of the township is ongoing and special attention is given to all public requests for road grading and these are carried out in order of priority and the availability of materials if required.

New street signs and white posts have been positioned and replaced. Watering of roads is consistent to ease some of the dust problems.

### **Works Depot Yard**

The Drive-In fence was realigned to expand the works yard, allowing more space for stock-piling of road building materials and new sheds for mechanic and distribution supply. Extensive clearing and levelling of the yard was carried out to accommodate both sheds. A new access gate opening onto Hutchison Street has been constructed, along with a new road in the yard to allow for ease of access for trucks.



**Road Sealing in progress**



**Darren Zechner, Works Manager**

### **Workshop**

The Works Department operates a comprehensive mechanical workshop to maintain and repair all works, water supply, electricity supply and administration vehicles. These range from trucks, loaders, graders and bitumen plant as well as cars and utilities. Minor construction work is also carried out. The workshop is operated by qualified diesel mechanic, James Fairfull, who also supervises the apprentice diesel mechanic Alastair Falland.

### **Other Works Duties**

- Breakaways Reserve Maintenance
- Council Building Maintenance
- Drive Inn Maintenance
- Sports Area Maintenance
- Town Hall Maintenance
- Opal Festival and Coober Pedy Race Weekends:
  - Contribution of labour and machinery to help bring these events to fruition
- Power Station:
  - Cleanup and carting of contaminated soil from the old diesel tanks site to a specially prepared poly lined pit in a separate area at the rubbish

dump. Carting of materials to fill and level ground where tanks were positioned

- Private Works – commercial rubbish bin pickups
- Quarry Sales and deliveries of sand and metal material
- Relocation of stand pipe:  
Work completed on refilling bore water outlet - water used for dust control.
- Weather Station

### **Parks & Gardens**

Tom Curnow (Supervisor) and Ronald Michie, are responsible for the upkeep of Council's Reserves including Keane Reserve, McDougall Road tree plantations, Jewellers Shop Noodling Area, Town Hall Gardens and the Aerodrome as well as watering and maintaining the Cemetery. Daily checks and maintenance of watering systems are carried out at the school oval, triangle, the free BBQ areas and playground. They also sweep roads and assist the works construction and maintenance teams when required.



At work in the olive grove

### **Dog & Cat Management**

Tom and Ronald also fulfil this role, keeping the errant dogs and cats in check. Injections are given to dogs for fleas, ticks and mange and these services are free for registered animals as well as birth control injections given to female dogs if requested by the

owner. With the assistance of a staff member from the Umoona Community, Tom is able to implement dog control measures at the Community and in the main street and assist indigenous dog owners. Any unwanted and neglected pups are then placed in the dog pound and dealt with at a later date. If any of these services are required for animals, residents are urged to contact Council. Tom and James Michie attended a Dog and Cat Management seminar in Whyalla to upgrade their knowledge.

The new dog pound facility is operational with the installation of an air conditioner and automatic waterers. An area which has yet to be fitted out has been set aside as a surgery for visiting vets.

### **Waste Depot**

The Council operated Waste Depot (licensed under the EPA), which is situated 4 km north of town on the Oodnadatta Road, has commenced the second stage of operation this year and is expected to last until May/June 2004. The Depot operates from 1.00 pm to 4.00 pm Monday to Sunday and is closed on public holidays. Dumping of household and other waste is free, however, Council does charge for truckloads and commercial bins etc. Dumping anywhere else in town or on the opal fields is illegal and Council will prosecute any offenders.

### **Rubbish Collection**

Daily residential collection from the green 'wheelie' bins has proven to be successful. The majority of residents have been placing their bins in the appropriate positions for and most of the time the bins are being placed correctly on the road for automatic pick-up by the rubbish compactor.

## **Aerodrome**

Council is the owner of the aerodrome that is licensed by CASA (Civil Aviation Safety Authority) and to meet regulation standards, daily safety inspections are carried out with regular cleaning of lights, markings and markers; sweeping of the runway, taxiway and buildings as well as grading, rolling, slashing and poisoning of vegetation within the airport runway and taxiway perimeters. Coober Pedy's Aerodrome requires considerable maintenance to keep it to the standard for which it has been recognised.

During March an emergency airport exercise was undertaken, involving Council and all emergency services, including Police, Country Fire Service, State Emergency Service, Ambulance and parents and children from the school. This exercise also updates procedures and awareness for new recruits.

Darren Zechner completed an Airport Reporting Officer Course in October as well as an Airport Safety Management Course in May. Both James and Ronald Michie completed an Airport Safety Officer Training Course in June.

## **Aged Housing**

Council maintains 4 dugout units situated on Harlequin Drive, as well as 4 aboveground units on Van Brugge Street. These units are for the elderly and any interested persons requesting occupancy should contact the Community Health Sister at the Health Centre.

## **Weigh Bridge**

During February the weigh bridge office and monitor were relocated in the depot to keep within guidelines and meet Road Transport requirements. Trenching was required to locate underground services to this building.

## **Training**

Council is committed to a high standard of development and training for its employees including operator tickets for plant and equipment, senior first aid courses and work zone traffic management.

## **Staff**

There were a number of staff changes throughout this financial year due to the resignation of:

Kym Hunt (Works Manager) early June 2003

Michael White and Mark East (Construction & Maintenance),

Norman Riessen (Construction & Maintenance Supervisor) resigning at the end of November due to other commitments.

Ben Harrison - after completion of Mechanic Apprenticeship.



**New apprentice diesel mechanic Alastair Falland**



New staff appointments included:

Darren Zechner commenced as Work  
Manager in September

Construction and Maintenance  
Supervisor was filled internally by  
Terry Clark

James Fairfull was employed as a  
Diesel Mechanic in November,

Timothy Byrnes (Construction &  
Maintenance) employed in January,

Norman Riessen rejoined our team at  
the end of February (Construction &  
Maintenance).

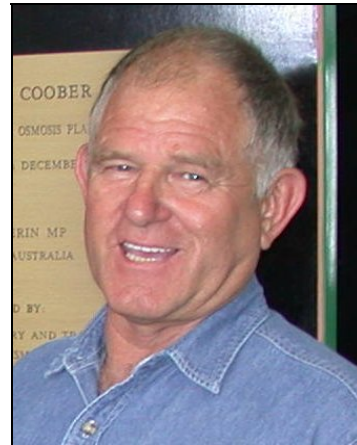
Alastair Falland commenced his Diesel  
Mechanic Apprenticeship in March

Scott Mazzone (Construction &  
Maintenance) commenced in May

**Darren Zechner**  
**Works Manager**

## **WATER SERVICE DEPARTMENT**

The Coober Pedy Water Supply System, comprising bore field, desalination plant, storage and reticulation has been in operation now for 19 years. Some areas of the operation are showing their age and require constant maintenance and some areas are being upgraded as time and finances permit.



**Water Supply Manager Les Hoad**

### **BOREFIELD**

There have only been two leaks in the Asbestos Cement (AC) pipeline this year, due to the 251 (1,506m) new pipe replacements. There have been a number of P.V.C. pipe line leaks from the Oolgelima Creek to Coober Pedy.

Gas substitution is still employed on genset motors at the bore site, extending service and maintenance costs.

### **WATER TREATMENT PLANT**

Since the new plant was installed in mid-November 2001, there has been no shortage of water for the town. The underground tank (known as the snake pit) was relined and is holding water, giving the town an additional two days storage capacity. The original Reverse Osmosis (RO) plant is still performing, with the membranes having passed the 5 ½ year mark. A new set of membranes has been purchased for installation during next financial year.

### **RETICULATION SYSTEM**

The town reticulation system is showing signs of age, with some ductile iron fittings and valves rusting, causing occasional smelly and discoloured water. Water Supply staff is replacing fittings and has repaired

250 leaks in the town reticulation system which remains a source of frustration. However some interruptions to supply and small amounts of discoloured water are inevitable. Water Supply staff urge consumers to notify the council of water quality irregularities and suspected system leaks (damp patches on ground) to enable prompt attention by staff.

### **WATER QUALITY**

The District Council of Coober Pedy is committed to providing the highest achievable water quality as per guidelines recommended by the National Health and Medical Research Council of Australia (NHMRC), which provide the basis for maintaining quality control.

Water samples are collected and undergo bacteriological and chemical analysis on a monthly basis, or more frequently if deemed necessary, by the S.A. Water Corporation at its Australian Water Quality Centre at Bolivar. Daily tests are also carried out in-house to maintain quality.

## **SEWERAGE SYSTEM**

The sewerage scheme has been operating efficiently with normal preventative maintenance and repairs being carried out.

The quality of treated effluent has been maintained to correct levels as required by the Government Statutory Bodies, and is evidenced by the condition of the irrigated school oval and Triangle recreation areas, which are a credit to the Parks and Gardens department of Council. There is still quite a margin between our current minimum and maximum intake, indicating that more properties could be connected.

**Les Hoad**  
**Water Supply Manager**

## **ELECTRICITY SUPPLY** **DEPARTMENT**

The Power Station is owned and operated by the District Council of Coober Pedy and for the past fifteen years, has been generating and distributing power to the township of Coober Pedy.

The diesel generation plant consists of the following:

Wartsila 8V25, Caterpillar D398, Cummins KTA50, and a Ruston 16 and a Ruston 8, RK3C series generators.

Following constant interruptions in the power supply due to operation control system failure, the generation section was shut down on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2002. Four portable generation units were hired by Council from Cummins Diesel, Adelaide to maintain township supply.

After extensive upgrading of the control automation system, two of the hire units were returned to Adelaide on 28<sup>th</sup> May 2003. Two of Council's generators were bought on line to carry the load required by the town.

Gavin Talbot, Electrician and Power Station operator, with the assistance of a Trades Assistant and a casual mechanic, managed to maintain the generators and keep supply of electricity to the town on-going. Very stressful times were experienced by all the staff in keeping the generators operational.

Below outlines some of the events that took place during the past twelve months.



**Distribution Supervisor Peter McBain**

### **Generation**

From July 2003 to late November 2003, the remaining 2 Cummins rental generators supported No. 1 Wartsila, No. 2 Caterpillar, No. 5 Ruston and No. 6 Ruston to sustain supply of electricity to the town. During this period repairs and modifications were carried out on all of these engines in preparation for them to carry the whole station load.

The new PLC (Program Logic Control) system was fully integrated to enable generator call-up and shutdown to cater for electricity demand requirements. Major changes were made to the PLC to give better performance in controlling the gensets. Extensive maintenance on equipment, generators and compressors was carried out in preparation for the disconnection of the rental generators and reversion back to the 'old' power station.

On 25<sup>th</sup> November 2003, the remaining 2 Cummins rental generators were taken off-line and returned to Adelaide, allowing the town feeder to be operated through the power station. Continual 24/7 monitoring saw the generators perform well during December 2003 and January 2004, with maintenance being undertaken during the night as loads reduced.

This well-planned procedure saw the station perform extremely well during the warmer months.

A few outages were experienced during April, May and June 2004 as the commissioning date of the new StateWest Power station drew closer. High maximum loads were experienced during June 2004, along with some minor problems with No. 1 Wartsila. The Electricity Supply staff experienced very trying times, working to capacity and hopeful that the other generators would sustain delivery of power to the community.



New Power Station under construction

Some assistance was given to StateWest Power in the upgrading of the high voltage switchboard ready to accommodate the new engines.

### **Distribution**

Council's distribution system consists of overhead lines of approximately 120 kilometres in length along with underground cable of some 7 kilometres in length.

There is and has been for some time a national shortage of tradespersons in the field of linespersons, which has seen our Distribution staff of 2 supplemented by labour hire from Adelaide, in order to continue to maintain Council's distribution system.

Maintenance and upgrades undertaken by the Distribution Section include:

- Realignment of street mains and additional lights in Old Water Tank and Umoona Roads
- Upgrading of power lines on Italian Club Road commenced
- Upgrade of existing mains along Flat Hill Road and Gough Street achieved greater power line height and more flexibility for movement of mining machinery
- New multi-purpose vehicle arrived in November with training to follow
- Continual testing of all line transformers with Poly Logger to evenly distribute phase loading
- Work associated with relocation to the Works Depot
- Installation of new high voltage feeder cables to upgrade feeders to facilitate the new StateWest Power engines



New Distribution Shed under construction

### **SWER Connections & Earth Testing**

An extension to the SWER was installed at Aston Road, with new connections were installed in Potch Gully (2) and one at Hopeful Hills, both involved the undergrounding of cables across the highway.

Earth testing is on-going and will continue until completed.



## **Street Lighting**

A night patrol of all street lighting is carried out every two months and lights repaired and replaced where necessary. Work requests by consumers indicate other lights that need replacing in between these patrols and are dealt with as soon as possible.

As the need arises, the old 40 Watt fluorescent lights are replaced with 80 Watt mercury vapour lights.

## **Office of the Technical Regulator**

Staff from the Office of the Technical Regulator, Adelaide, visit Coober Pedy twice yearly. They inspect several properties at random to ensure they comply with regulations. The majority of the problems they identified have now been rectified.

## **Wind Turbine**

Council owns and operates the Nordex Wind Turbine which generates power and assists in fuel savings. This turbine was not operational for several months when the hire units were installed.

In November, the Wind Turbine was once again put on-line, after having the line work restored to its original condition, but due to this operating on an old DOS computer program, it was unable to be incorporated into the generator control system, although working well on a stand alone system.

The Wind Turbine will be an integral part of the StateWest Power generation program.



Cleaning the wind turbine tower

## **Staff Resignations**

During the reporting period the following staff resigned:

The Manager of the Power Station, Mr Brian Mooney, Mr Robin Paech, Power Station Operator and Mr Nick Ridgway, Trades Assistant, all left Council's employ to take up positions out of town.

On the 13<sup>th</sup> of July 2004 the generation section of the power station will close and the engines installed for StateWest Power Pty Ltd will be commissioned.

Many thanks are extended to all the power station staff members for their loyalty and dedication during the past twelve months.

**Peter McBain**  
**Distribution Supervisor**

## **VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE**

In September 2003 Mr Stephen Staines left the position of Tourist Information Officer for a position with the Northern Region Development Board where he is now the Tourism Product Development Officer for the Outback Region. Ms Leah Henderson has taken on the position after working locally at the Desert Cave Hotel for 3 years. Her extensive travel within Outback South Australia and Central Australia make her an ideal person for the position.



**Leah Henderson, Visitor Information Officer, passing on information to a visitor**

The Visitor Information Centre is to permanently remain at the Council offices. Major work to be carried out will include the expansion of the centre and moving the offices of Mayor Steve Baines, CEO Trevor McLeod and Executive Assistant Lyn Freeman. A new structure will be attached to the rear of the existing building to house 3 new offices. It is hoped that the work will be completed by late 2004 or early 2005. Funding for the expansion and upgrading of the VIC is by way of a grant from the South Australian Tourism Commission.

The website continues to be regularly updated in order to provide current product tariffs, business information and upcoming events. This year has

also seen the construction of the District Council's own website (<http://www.cooberpedy.sa.gov.au>) with training provided by the Local Government Association. Considerable input into the construction of the website has been provided by both the outgoing and incoming Tourism Information Officers and is due to go live early in the new financial year.

The swimming pool continues to be extremely popular with visitors to Coober Pedy.



**Swimming Pool Manager Barry Daniell**

The Tourist Information Officer also contributed to and was a member of various committees in Coober Pedy, including the 2004 Opal Festival, Safety in Opal Mining Project, Outback Open Air Cinema and the United Bowling and Sporting Association.

**Leah Henderson  
Visitor Information Officer**

## Schedule of Community Grants

During the financial year the following community grants were allocated:

Coober Pedy Motor Club	2,500
Coober Pedy Amateur Racing Club Inc	2,150
Country Fire Service/Coober Pedy Brigade	2,100
Coober Pedy Lions Club/Tiny Peco Productions	1,000
MiniGems Child Care Centre	1,000
Kidz Fun Tent/Table	800
Coober Pedy Area School Out of School Hours Care	800
Kupa Piti Kungka Tjuta	100

**\$ 10,450**

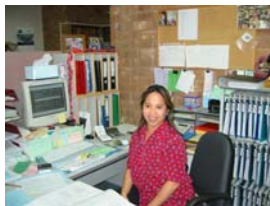
### Census 2001 (As per 2001 Census Statistics)

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Population	1,713	1,349	3,062
Speaks language other than English aged 5 or more	472	308	780
Australian citizens	1,302	1,009	2,311
People of Indigenous Origin	173	164	337

### Computers & the Internet

In the week preceding the 2001 Census, 643 people (22%) had used a personal computer.

The total number of persons who had used the Internet in the week preceding the 2001 Census was 662.



**Electricity/Water Officer  
Sherill Wood**



**Creditors/Debtors Officer  
Melissa Rosewarne**



**Rates & Property Officer  
Maria Daniell**

## **ELECTED MEMBERS & SENIOR STAFF**

**Subsequent to the May 2003 Election and as at 30th June 2004**

### **ELECTED MEMBERS**

Mayor	<b>BAINES Steve</b>	86 725 140
Deputy Mayor	<b>Maylin, Michael</b>	86 723 891
Councillors	<b>Athanasiadis, Paul</b>	86 725 179
	<b>Blobel, Harry</b>	0407 711 942
	<b>Doulgeris, Tina</b>	0419 416 824
	<b>Rapaic, Boro</b>	86 725 068
	<b>Temple, Rose</b>	86 723 476
	<b>Wardle, Roanna</b>	86 723 309

### **SENIOR ADMINISTRATION**

Chief Executive Officer	<b>McLeod, Trevor</b>	86 725 408
Finance & Administration Manager	<b>Clark, Damien</b>	86 723 828
Manager Water Supply	<b>Hoad, Les</b>	86 725 286
Manager Works	<b>Zechner, Darren</b>	86 725 069

## **SELECTED STATISTICS FOR 12 MONTHS TO 30<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2004**

<u>Properties</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Valuation</u>
Crown Land (non-rateable)	328	10,584,088
Vacant	266	2,040,205
Residential	1,163	51,266,862
Commercial & Industrial	131	23,825,450
Other non-rateable	2	285,000
Primary	0	0
<b><u>Total</u></b>	<b><u>1890</u></b>	<b><u>88,001,605</u></b>

Building Applications (Commercial Only)	8
Planning Applications	16
Land Division	0

### Water Supply Department

Raw water pumped from bore field	444,708 kl
Potable water produced	308,820 kl
Desalination operating hours	10,051 hrs
Number of customers	1,587
New connections for 12 months to 30.6.2004	6
Services removed	3
Sewerage Scheme intake	47,439 kl
Irrigation (grey) water	43,560 kl
Highest recorded daily water demand	1,129 kl

### Electricity Supply Department

Kilowatt hours of electricity generated (including Wind Turbine)	13,360,058 kwh
Town Consumption	12,733,822 kwh
Fuel consumed (litres)	3,755,628 lt

### Works Department

**Roads** – Council road lengths at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2004 (includes roads to mining fields)

Lengths at end of year	<u>Sealed</u>	<u>Formed</u>	<u>Unformed</u>	<u>Natural surface</u>	<u>Total</u>
In built-up areas (km)	23.00	38.00			61.00
In non built-up areas (km)	2.00	102.00	14	156	274.00
<b>Total Road Lengths</b>	<b><u>25.00</u></b>	<b><u>140.00</u></b>	<b><u>14</u></b>	<b><u>156</u></b>	<b><u>335.00</u></b>