

23 August 2016

Hon Richard Wynne  
Minister for Planning  
Level 16, 8 Nicholson Street  
East Melbourne, VIC 3002

Dear Minister Wynne

I am writing to you as President of LGPro and on behalf of our members to express our great disappointment at the comments made by you and Premier Andrews in the Herald Sun and The Age on 16 August and in the media release of the same date *Wake Up Call for Victorian Councils*.

**Quotes attributable to Acting Minister for Local Government Richard Wynne**

*"Our ultimate consideration here is ensuring residents don't have to pay for the administrative mistakes made by their local councils."*

*"The Councils have admitted themselves to gross incompetence in not meeting this simple requirement, and they have asked the Government for a solution to ensure ratepayers don't suffer as a result of these mistakes."*

In our view these comments are gratuitous, derogatory and inaccurate. State and Local Governments both contributed to this administrative error. Releasing the report to the media without prior consultation with, or notification to, at least the perceived non-complying councils was disrespectful and put officers and councillors in the position of finding out through the media that *"More than 100 Victorian councillors, and 13 councils, will be disqualified for failing to comply with a new code of conduct. Administrators will be appointed for seven weeks to replace the 13 councils."* (The Age 15 August) As it turns out, these comments were also inaccurate.

As a previous Minister for Local Government you should be fully aware that the officers who work in this sector, like their State public servant colleagues, are in the vast majority ethical, highly competent people who are interested in achieving the best outcome for the community. They do not deserve to be publicly misrepresented in this way.

Local Government, as the closest level of government to the community, is often the easy target for political point scoring. LGPro would prefer to work in partnership with a State Government that values the contribution of our members, and works to build community confidence in a sector that makes a real difference to people's lives every day. We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss how this can occur at the earliest opportunity.

Yours sincerely



Brendan McGrath  
**PRESIDENT**