

LOCAL GOVERNMENT WORKING FOR OUR COMMUNITIES

FACT SHEET 4 CONSTITUTIONAL RECOGNITION

Nationally, local government seeks formal recognition in the Australian Constitution.

Local government fulfils a significant and increasingly important role within the Australian Federation.

As such there is a need to protect the community's right to a democratically elected local sphere of government.

Local government's role in the Federation needs to be formally recognised and enshrined in the nation's defining document – the Australian Constitution – through a referendum.

In December 2007 the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) established a 12-month program to crystallise local government's advice to the Australian Government and the Federal Opposition on the form that constitutional recognition should take.

Local government's national process commenced in March 2008 with local Council Conversations.

With input provided from these Council Conversations, and contributions from some of our nation's leading thinkers on constitutional reform, ALGA convened a special national 'State and Experts Forum' to develop the case for constitutional recognition.

The case for constitutional recognition and a range of potential options are to be fully considered at a Local Government Constitutional Summit to be held concurrently with ALGA's Special National General Assembly of Local Government from 9 – 11 December 2008.

Armed with the Summit's views on the case for constitutional recognition, ALGA plans to work closely with the Australian Government on the development of a referendum.