A Guide to Contiguous Local Authorities Groups and funding applications
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Introduction

The Contiguous Local Authorities Group (CLAG) funding scheme is a key component of the Western Australia Department of Health’s (WA DOH) program that assists with the management of mosquitoes of public health significance across WA.

The State Government funded CLAG scheme was endorsed by Cabinet in 1990 and provides a mechanism for DOH to assist local government (LG) with management, funding and technical aspects of health-driven mosquito management in an effort to reduce the risk of exposure to mosquito-borne diseases throughout WA. The scheme recognises that mosquitoes do not stop at LG boundaries and relies on LGs working together to manage mosquitoes effectively.

The aim of this guide is to provide information about:

- CLAG formation;
- the CLAG funding scheme; and
- the requirements for funding submission applications.

What is a CLAG?

A CLAG is a group of neighbouring LGs, who share a common mosquito problem and commit to working together to manage mosquitoes in an effort to reduce the risk of mosquito-borne disease in their respective localities. In some of the larger regional areas of WA CLAGs can also operate as a single LG CLAG when, due to their size, it’s not possible to work effectively with other LGs to manage mosquitoes.

Minimum requirements for a CLAG

To become an approved CLAG, a group of LGs (or single LG for some regional areas) must apply to the Mosquito Control Advisory Committee (MCAC). The MCAC is a multi-agency committee which is administered by DOH and has representatives from Department of Planning; Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions; and, Regional and Metropolitan Local Government.

To be eligible to form a CLAG the following requirements apply:

- there must be a demonstrated public health risk from mosquitoes in the region (locally acquired cases of mosquito-borne disease)
- a memorandum of understanding (MOU) must be developed and endorsed by the proposed LG members and the DOH;
- the proposed CLAG must have an approved mosquito management plan (MMP) in place and;
- a trust fund must be established that enables funds to accumulate to be used in emergency situations when additional funding for mosquito management is required.

**Note:** Only an MCAC approved CLAG may apply for funding.
Trust Funds and how to access them

Each CLAG is required to establish a trust fund. The purpose of setting up the fund is to ensure capacity for funds is available in the event of a significant mosquito nuisance issue and/or mosquito-borne disease outbreak. To meet the funding scheme requirements; once the fund is set up, 10% of the CLAG’s contribution to their annual budget is to be deposited and carried over each year enabling the accumulation of funds. There are several options available for CLAGs to meet this requirement;

Option 1 - agree to deposit an annual amount of 10% of the CLAGs contribution to the annual budget.

Option 2 - agree on a ‘fixed’ annual amount that each LG will contribute.

Option 3 - agree to deposit a ‘lump sum amount’ into the fund at the commencement of the CLAG that each LG contributes to equally as a one off until such time as the fund is accessed.

Many CLAGS also have their fund ‘capped’. This means that the CLAG has estimated how much they are likely to need in the event of a significant mosquito nuisance and/or mosquito-borne disease outbreak. Once the fund reaches the agreed ‘capped’ amount, no further funds are contributed until such time as the fund is accessed. Estimating how much funding may be necessary can be difficult, particularly if the CLAG hasn’t previously experienced a significant issue previously. However, CLAGs that have experienced their worst year (to date) are able to look at the cost difference between their worst and best years. This can provide a reasonable idea of how much funds shall be held in trust.

Access to CLAG trusts requires prior approval from the MCAC. The request for approval needs to come from the CLAG chairperson and include a brief explanation as to why access is required and what the funds are proposed to be used for.

Advantages of forming a CLAG

Once a CLAG has been endorsed some of the benefits include:

- An opportunity to apply to DOH for annual funding to support the CLAG’s mosquito management initiatives. In most instances approved funding is provided on a 50:50 basis between the CLAG and the DOH;
- Support from the DOH through the provision of best-practice mosquito management advice;
- Regular meetings with other LGs and DOH which allow for knowledge, experience and logistics to be shared;
- Regular updates of notified human cases of mosquito-borne disease in the CLAG region.

How to apply for CLAG funding?

Prior to the end of each financial year (usually around early June), the DOH send each CLAG a ‘CLAG funding budget application form’. The form is provided as an excel template with the following sections for completion.
**Funding acquittal for previous financial year** – refers to information about the previous financial year’s spend so as to calculate any carry over funds.

**Chemical budget** - refers to chemical requests for the new financial year. The information is broken down into chemicals required for larvicide treatments, fogging (for regional CLAGs only); residual barrier sprays (regional CLAG’s only) and surface oil.

**Non-Chemical budget** – refers to any request for the following:
- equipment to be used for mosquito management;
- physical control strategies e.g. filling/dRAINING;
- cultural control strategies e.g. advertising, signage, repellent and Fight the Bite messaging; or
- training and development – e.g. mosquito management training course, limited to one officer per local government per year

**Other** – refers to any mosquito management related strategy not captured in the previous sections. Please contact Medical Entomology on 9285 5500 or email medical.entomology@health.wa.gov.au to discuss your proposal.

**Note:** The form is due back by mid-July each year.

**Funding assessment and submission requirements**

All CLAG funding applications are assessed by the MCAC.

With the exception of a newly formed CLAG (with no previous funding applications), all CLAGs are required to report on their previous year’s expenditure when applying for the next financial year. This could be via a financial statement that shows all CLAG funding related purchases. This may need to be supported with evidence, such as chemical control records, including dates, sites, area treated and product used etc.

In order for a CLAG to be eligible to apply for an upcoming round of funding, the MCAC must be satisfied with the level of reporting from the previous financial year.

Written quotes must be included with applications for chemical control, exclusive of GST, and should include the cost of freight.

Applications for new equipment will require a brief explanation as to why the equipment is needed and how it will assist/improve the CLAG’s mosquito management program. A written quote must also accompany the application. Please ensure the quote excludes GST and does not include freight costs.

Funding of all physical control strategies are subject to environmental approvals. Applications must be supported with a fully itemised quote that demonstrates how the funds will be used.

All freight costs associated with purchases for cultural control strategies are the responsibility of the CLAG. Written quotes (excluding GST) and an explanation/justification for the cultural control strategy must be provided to support the application.
Resources potentially available through CLAG funding applications

The involvement of DOH in providing funding to CLAGs focuses on managing mosquitoes of public health significance. The following resources and components of a mosquito management program may be supported through the CLAG funding scheme:

Chemical control

Chemical control forms a significant part of mosquito management in most programs. The MCAC supports the appropriate use of chemicals for controlling nuisance and disease-carrying mosquitoes. This includes the use of larvicides as a preferred option as they are more effective in reducing mosquito numbers and are also more target specific than adulticides. In terms of chemical control, the MCAC may support the purchase of:

- larvicides;
- adulticides and associated diluents and carriers for CLAGs in regional WA where larviciding is not a feasible option due to the scale and cost of a larviciding program. This includes both products used for fogging and residual sprays; and
- freight costs associated with the delivery of larvicides and adulticides, due to the substantial charges that can be applied for product delivery.

Mosquito management equipment

CLAG funding may be used to support the purchase of equipment that is specific to mosquito management. Without the correct equipment, mosquito management programs can be ineffective. The initial set-up for a program can be costly for CLAGs particularly those for small LGs with limited budgets.

Equipment purchases are more likely to be supported for newly established or developing CLAGs. The MCAC will consider each CLAG’s application on a case-by-case basis.

The type of equipment that may be supported through the CLAG funding scheme includes (but is not limited to) equipment for:

- application of chemicals;
- surveillance of adult mosquitoes (e.g. mosquito traps);
- mosquito identification (microscopes, light source etc);
- surveillance of larval mosquitoes at breeding sites; and
- ongoing aerial larviciding program that is funded by the DOH in the southwest of the state.

Note. The cost of freight associated with the purchase of large equipment to regional areas may be considered on a case by case basis.

The MCAC will not support the purchase of the following:

- vehicles (including cars, boats, kayaks, quad bikes etc.);
- ongoing consumables (such as batteries, dry ice, CO₂ gas);
• personal protective equipment (this should be provided by the LG under their duty of care to their employees);
• ongoing costs for new or existing equipment such as insurances, licences, registrations, maintenance and servicing;
• IT equipment and associated software licences;
• general hardware and tools (not specific to mosquito management); and
• cost of freight associated with the purchase of equipment (with exception of large equipment to regional areas).

**Physical control strategies**

For all earthworks applications, there must be evidence to show there is currently a mosquito problem associated with the site (e.g. larval surveillance and/or adult mosquito trapping results over time). There must also be assurance and evidence from the CLAG that there are no other contributing mosquito problems at nearby sites complicating the issue. This will ensure that if the site is remediated, the problem will be rectified.

For applications requesting funds for investigations into how to remediate a site (e.g. contour survey and proposed drainage plans) there must be assurance from the CLAG that they will endeavour to fund the remediation. The MCAC will not support funding an investigation if there is no commitment to carry out the associated recommendations for the site.

The CLAG must sign a declaration stating there are no licences or permits required for physical earthworks at a site **OR** must have applied for/be in the process of applying for all necessary licences/permits (e.g. environmental permits) required for the work to be undertaken. Earthworks may be approved in principle by the MCAC, however funding will not be provided until all permits/licences are in place.

Physical control strategies that may be supported include:

- remediation (filling/draining/clearing) of breeding sites;
- runnelling;
- contour surveys; and
- development of remediation plans.

The MCAC is unlikely to support:

- earthworks considered routine or general maintenance (e.g. clearing drains and water retention basins of overgrown vegetation); and
- earthworks that are unlikely to (due to close proximity of other breeding sites) reduce the overall mosquito problem in an area.

**Cultural control strategies including ‘Fight the Bite Campaign’ resources**

Cultural control strategies can have a significant impact on a mosquito management program. They become particularly important in areas where chemical control is not feasible or has limited efficacy in reducing adult mosquito numbers due to the large scale of the breeding sites present.
The MCAC can support CLAGs who want to utilise the ‘Fight the Bite’ (FTB) campaign materials. As it is a State-wide campaign, messaging and branding must remain consistent with what has been developed.

There are many campaign areas that LG can consider and potentially incorporate into their funding application. General ideas where FTB messaging can be reinforced are listed below:

**In the workplace** – partnering with other units within your organisation (e.g. marketing/event teams, community safety, and library), displaying messaging through workwear.

**Local community and Events** – provide displays at fetes, fairs, movie nights, library events, schools and festivals. Conduct competitions or presentations at schools and childcare facilities.

**Businesses** – engage with local businesses (e.g. camping stores, petrol stations, cafes and restaurants).

Other types of cultural control strategies that may also be supported include:

- advertising, marketing and PR (FTB branded) which may include formats for TV, radio, cinema, print and social media;
- supply of personal repellent at outdoor events;
- signage/warnings in mosquito prone areas; and
- Other public education initiatives.

### Training and development

Mosquito management training for staff is critical in building knowledge and expertise within mosquito management programs. Mosquito management is a complex task and it is recommended that staff involved in a mosquito management program undertake an appropriate training course.

As such, registration fees for new staff to attend training at an approved mosquito management course may be supported under the CLAG funding scheme. Registration fees for training may also be granted to staff that have not completed a mosquito management course in the last 5 years to allow them to keep up with best practice and to be informed of new techniques/methods for managing mosquitoes.

Up to 100% of the cost of the registration fees for a mosquito management course deemed appropriate by DOH may be approved provided the following criteria are met:

- staff member must be directly involved in the mosquito management program; and
- staff member has not attended any mosquito management training in the past five (5) years.

To assist LG officers in regional areas in attending a mosquito management course, the MCAC may consider approving up to $1000 for the cost of a return economy flight for the LG participant.
Due to the potential for new mosquito management staff to commence employment (and therefore require training) outside of the standard budget application timeframe, there is an opportunity for applications to be considered out of session.

There is a limit of one training opportunity per LG per year.

It is important to note that CLAG funding provided for a training opportunity does not include:

- registration or course fees for conferences;
- occupational Safety and Health training programs;
- accommodation;
- meals;
- transport; and/or
- other incidentals associated with attending an approved training course.

**Personnel and contract positions**

CLAG funding cannot be used to finance any of the following:

- staffing positions (including short-term contracts); and/or
- external consultants (including consultants employed for program reviews and mosquito trapping and identification).

**Accountability**

To address the requirement for transparency when using public funds there will be situations when information needs to be provided to MCAC about CLAG’s expenditure.

**Reporting on expenditure**

Occasionally, the MCAC require a CLAG to provide a report on their expenditure for an item or strategy that has been previously funded. This may occur where the item or strategy was either a new initiative or innovative. Reporting on the expenditure can assist MCAC in determining if the item or strategy has been effective and if it could be funded on an ongoing basis.

**Unspent funds**

In cases where funds are unspent, the funds may be required to be repaid to DOH or alternatively an application can be made to DOH to obtain approval to carry-over these funds to the next financial year to be used for the original purpose approved by the MCAC.