



Short Courses (2 days) for Ratings Staff and Managers

NSW Rating Professionals
Inc Training Program



PREREQUISITES

Prior to undertaking any modules it is expected that the participant(s) is/are competent in the relevant prior modules, in particular modules 1 & 2.

Course outlines are on the following pages.

Local Government Training Institute

4 Sandringham Ave Thornton NSW 2322

PO Box 137, Thornton NSW 2322

Telephone: (02) 4922 2333 Facsimile: (02) 4966 0655

Email: reception@lgti.com.au

ABN: 24 232 406 407

www.lgti.com.au

Introduction To Local Government And The Basics Of Rating

PART ONE – WHAT EVERYONE WORKING IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT NEEDS TO KNOW

- Understanding Local Government
- Organisational Structures Within Councils
- Communication Channels Within Councils
- Local Government and the Law
- Interpreting Statutes
- The Acts You Need to Know About
- Negligence and Defamation
- Sources of Income to a Council in NSW –and the Ideology behind the way Income is Raised
- The Department of Local Government
- The Valuer General's Office
- Policy Making Explained

PART TWO – STARTING OFF IN RATING

- The Basics of Categorisation
- Calculating "Ad Valorem" Rates
- Ad Valorem Rates with Special Rates & Charges
- Introducing Base Amounts
- Minimum Rates
- An Overview of the Draft Revenue Pricing Policy and the Management Plan
- The Main Levy – What to Expect
- Options for Payment
- An Overview of Concessions
- Liability for Rates and Charges
- Occupational Health and Safety
- The NSW Rating Professionals Inc

Rating Issues At The Enquiry Counter

PART ONE: CUSTOMER SERVICE ISSUES

- Customer Service – from the Customer's Perspective
- Dealing with Difficult Customers
- Enquiries that Should be Directed Elsewhere and Those that Should be put in Writing
- Policy Issues Affecting Rating
- An Overview of Cashiering
- Managing Your Time and Preparing for Peak Periods
- How Enquiry Staff can Become a Link Between Customers and Management

PART TWO: YOUR GUIDE TO RATING ENQUIRIES

- Details on the Rates and Charges Notice and Using Your Rating File
- Counter and Telephone Enquiries with Rates and Instalment Notices
- Some Common Valuation Enquiries
- Categorisation Enquiries
- Pensioner Rebates
- Postponed Rates and Charges
- The Issue of Financial Hardship
- Some Sundry Enquiry Issues
- Overview of the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998
- Overview of changes to Water Supply, Sewerage and Liquid Trade Waste Charges

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Rates Financial And Property Controls – 1

PART ONE: RATES FINANCIAL CONTROLS

- Methods of Payment and Their Audit
- Journal Adjustments for Cash Items
- Journals Adjusting the Levy
- Designing Journals for Transparency
- Some Quick Tips on Avoiding Reconciliation Problems with Journals

PART TWO: UNDERSTANDING BASIC ACCOUNTING AND YOUR COUNCIL'S FINANCIAL STRUCTURE

- Some Basic Accounting Principles
- The Financial Structure of a Council
- Linking Rates Transactions to the General Ledger
- Accounting – The Big Picture
- The Financial Statements

PART THREE: PROPERTY INFORMATION

- Land Titles
- Section 603 Certificates and Notices of Transfer

Rates Financial & Property Controls – (2)

Designed for Rates Managers and Assistant Rates Managers, or anyone else who wants to substantially develop their Rating knowledge.

This is the sixth training module made available by the NSW Rating Professionals. It comprises a two day course and a 112 page book covering:-

The Main Levy. All stages are covered in chronological order – from the preparation in March through to the mailing of the Notices.

Supplementary Levies.

General Revaluations. You are taken through it step by step from beginning to end.

The text can be used as a progressive check list. It covers closing off procedures, trial levies and test printing environments and why each procedure is important.

The layout of the book is designed for the newcomer to not only follow easily but understand the background to every stage. The experienced practitioner will also be quickly able to refer to the highlighted "tips" and "troubleshooting" sections as reference points.

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Debt Recovery

Included in content:

- Finding a method of debt recovery that suits you.
- Establishing policy and a debt recovery programme from performance statistics.
- Rating issues that can adversely affect legal action.
- Some examples of how to avoid bad debts in accounts receivable.
- How you can set up time saving internal control systems to manage debt recovery in both Rates and accounts receivable, including system maintenance and reporting.
- All about arrangements and letters of demand.
- Procedures for sale of land for unpaid Rates and garnishees of rent.
- The new draft ACCC/ASIC code of practice for debt recovery with excerpts and commentary.
- Sections of the Local Government Act relating to debt recovery fully explained.
- Locating debtors and going out into the field.
- Issues and ideas on minimising risk to yourself in legal and other situations.
- 14 page overview of legal action, processes including statements of liquidated claim, judgement, writ, bankruptcy, examining debtors etc.



Major Policy Issues for Rating

Included in content:

- Practical examples of creating Rating structures.
- Demographic and socio-economic factors.
- Commentary on some of the major legal requirements involved in creating the Revenue Pricing Policy (Water and Sewer overview only, to be dealt with in detail in another module).
- Relating Rating and charging revenues to expenditure needs.
- Projecting the costs of pensioner rebates and associated policy decisions relating to an aging population.
- Using Rating data as general statistical information for other areas of Council policy making - and how to achieve this.
- Debt recovery policy options.

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Module 7. Understanding Statutory Rating Requirements **NEW!**

This course takes you through the important legal issues of Categorisation, The Valuation of Land Act and the Statement of Compliance. There are also sections on how to handle applications for exemption from Rating and making valuation controls easier.

Besides practical advice on all aspects of categorisation, there is also an individual explanation of each of the major Court cases from 1993 to 2008 in easy to follow language as a reference guide. The hard work of interpreting Court judgments has been taken away - often with two or more pages devoted to a single case.

For the first time ever there is also a complete, Section by Section guide to the Valuation of Land Act in everyday language, covering every Section that has anything remotely to do with Rating, and bringing up where you may have problems using some Sections (and solutions). This will be an excellent reference guide for you.

There is a special part of the manual dealing with the Statement of Compliance in detail from the preparatory stages to conclusion, complete with "hands on" exercises. To supplement this there is a further unit on simplifying Valuation controls with the Statement of Compliance in mind.

There is another section describing what to do with applications for exemption from Rating, covering types of documents you need to see, collecting evidence, inspections and preparing a brief for a solicitor."

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