



Japan Local Government Centre  
(CLAIR, Sydney)



## CLAIR Forum

### Local Government Reform: Towards a Sustainable Future – Ideas from Japan –

Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2010, 9.00am to 4.00pm  
City of Stirling Council  
- 25 Cedric Street, Stirling, WA 6021 -

As Local Governments in Western Australia face reform, Japan itself has undergone significant reform for over a decade. To discuss and exchange ideas on this important topic, the Japan Local Government Centre will present its annual CLAIR Forum on “Local Government Reform”.

In collaboration with the Western Australian Local Government Association (WALGA), there will be a range of speakers from various levels of government, as well as speakers from Japan with experience in municipal amalgamation. We hope that the CLAIR Forum will be a wonderful opportunity to exchange ideas and learn from each other’s experience in thinking towards a sustainable future.

#### Speakers and Panelists will include:

- ◆ **Professor Sachio Konishi:** Kwansei Gakuin University - Former Chairman, Advisory Committee on Municipal Amalgamation, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communication
- ◆ **Mr. Osamu Niitsu:** Former Deputy Secretary- General, Amalgamation Transitional Committee, Hokuto City
- ◆ **Ms. Jennifer Mathews,** Director General, Department of Local Government
- ◆ **Professor Graham Sansom,** Director, Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government
- ◆ **Cr. Steven Pollard,** President, Shire of Northam
- ◆ **Mr. Tony Brun,** CEO, City of Geraldton- Greenough

\* Forum will be facilitated by **Mr. Anthony Quahe** from Civic Legal

**There will be ample time for questions and discussion.**

**The event is free of charge, with morning, afternoon tea and lunch provided.**

Please register your interest by emailing Hiromi Shimizu at [hiromi@jlgc.org.au](mailto:hiromi@jlgc.org.au) or  
Phone 02 9241 5033 for more information.

### **【Sponsors and Supporters】**

Sponsored by Stirling City Council



Also, supported by the ACELG



### **- LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN JAPAN -**

Japan has three tiers of government; central, prefectural and municipal. Prefectures and municipalities are recognised as local governments. The constitution of Japan provides a legal basis for local government and recognises local government as essential to democracy.

Municipalities are most in touch with the community. There are 1,778 municipalities (as of February 2010) and the population varies from 200 to over 3.5million. Municipalities provide basic services and infrastructure essential to the community including primary and junior high schools, fire and ambulance services.

In the last decade Japan has experienced major amalgamations in local government to provide better services to the community more efficiently. This was achieved voluntarily by local municipalities with strong support and advice from the central government. The current numbers of municipalities have dropped from 3,255 in 1999. Prefectures incorporate a wider area and cover 15 to 180 municipalities. Population varies from 600,000 to 12 million.

Every region in Japan is under the jurisdiction of a two-tiered local government system. Local government is administered by the Mayor in municipalities or the Governor in prefectures with members of the assembly who are all directly elected by the public. The Mayor or the Governor acts as both the chief executive and the representative of local government. They are responsible for imposing taxes and fees, allocating funds, appointing personnel and strategising long-term plans. The assembly is responsible for enacting by-laws, approving budgets and to oversee the Mayor or the Governor's activities.