

MEDIA RELEASE

EMBARGOED: Wednesday 28 July 2010

Lack of operational funding forces Western Australian Community Foundation to close its doors

Wednesday 28 July 2010: Communities across the State will miss out on significant support and services due to the Western Australian Community Foundation being unable to sustain its operations as a result of a lack of external funding.

Since 2004 the Foundation has made a significant impact throughout Western Australia. It currently has trusts and donation accounts covering 43 communities across WA with the majority of community funds under management earmarked to benefit regional communities.

A snap-shot of some of the initiatives that have been made possible within West Australian communities as a result of the Foundation's services include:

- Support to the Leonora Golden Gift community and sporting carnival;
- Enabling fund development for the Albany respite centre; and
- Establishing a mobile youth van, providing access to low cost or free activities to young people in the south west.

The need for the Foundation's philanthropic governance and services has been proven by the growth of the community funds under management of the organisation, with an increase from \$1 million to over \$7 million over three years; with 268 grants distributed to WA communities since its inception.

Mr Michael Anderson Chairman of the Western Australian Community Foundation today explained why the WA-based organisation has resorted to closure, despite such success.

"There has been rapid growth in regional and indigenous philanthropy over the last twelve months, increasing the need for the governance and support that the WACF provides to communities across the State," Mr Anderson said.

"The knock-on effect has been that the level of demand for our services has significantly impacted our operational resources. Today marks a sad day for community philanthropy in Western Australia," Mr Anderson said.

"We are still seeing an increase in the financial contributions being made by the corporate sector to establish funds in communities aligned with their business," Mr Anderson said.

"However despite the best efforts of the Board and management, securing funding to support the operating costs of our business, whilst also servicing community funds, in a post-GFC environment, has been a significant challenge for the Foundation," said Mr Anderson.

"The Foundation's paramount concern is that all of our stakeholders are aware of the situation and are fully informed on the future of the community funds during the Board's decision-making process," advised Mr Anderson.

The Foundation provides services to communities of all shapes and sizes: from city groups wishing to develop youth activities and rural townships needing to improve community facilities, to businesses wanting to take a more strategic approach to their giving.

It provides the necessary financial and legal frameworks required in managing community funds – as well as the support services – enabling communities to pursue their vision and become self-sustainable.

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