

ANNUAL REPORT 2019



LITTER
ENFORCEMENT
OFFICER NETWORK

Foreword from the Chairman of Keep Victoria Beautiful



The release of the new Environment Protection Act on July 01st 2020 is a massive step forward for litter and illegal dumping and we are proud to say that Keep Victoria Beautiful has had enforcement in our sights for a while.

Now auspicing the Litter Enforcement Officers Network (LEON), we are excited to be doing even more to empower the wonderful people working to reduce litter and illegal dumping.

LEON has grown tremendously since being founded in 2014 by Officers Travis Finlayson and Dylan Weeks.

The agenda: raise the technical capacity of officers and highlight the value of local councils dedicating officers to litter prevention.

Representatives from ten organisations attended the inaugural meeting, with LEON members quickly supporting the development of 2014 Victoria litter enforcement toolkit which became one of the most effective resources to assist officers in recent times.

Cr Dick Gross AM
Councillor, City of Port Phillip
Chair, Keep Australia Beautiful, Victoria
Lecturer, University of Melbourne

Fast forward to 2019, a year of consolidation for LEON, with generous funding from Sustainability Victoria allowing us to gather members and organisations to get the state discussing litter and illegal dumping once more.

New channels of communication kept the discussion going, with the Litterbites newsletter facilitating members discussion and submissions on the new Act and regulations. Members came together at the Australian Waste Expo, receiving scenario based training, expert support from the EPA and news on litter and illegal dumping.

While doing all of this, LEON grew to 223 members representing 68 organisations in Victoria and listened to the needs of 38 land managers across Victoria!

Befittingly, LEON members are now participating in the redevelopment of the 2014 Victorian litter enforcement toolkit, with the new 2020 Waste and Litter Toolkit supporting the rollout of the Environment Protection Amendment Act 2018.

As Victoria moves into the future, Keep Victoria Beautiful is excited to see LEON take action on everything we have heard. 2020 is a year for more growth and more valuable tools helping officers and land managers to tackle litter and illegal dumping statewide.

Litter Enforcement Officers Network What is LEON?

LEON was founded to raise the technical capacity of officers and highlight the value of local councils dedicating officers to litter prevention.

As the issues of litter and illegal dumping evolve, land managers have been compelled to change their approach to litter and illegal dumping regularly, leading to inconsistent approaches and outcomes.

To address this, LEON now focuses on reducing litter and illegal dumping by upskilling officers, promoting best practice and encouraging strong working relationships with land managers.

- OUR PURPOSE:**
- Provide and encourage a standardised approach to investigation, enforcement and prosecution.
 - Provide training opportunities for investigation, enforcement and prosecution.
 - Exchange skills, programs and ideas between authorised and unauthorised professionals.
 - Increase networking and collaboration among authorised officers.
 - Circulate the latest VCAT and Magistrate Court cases related to litter.
 - Advocate for the benefit of land managers and enforcement officers working with litter or illegal dumping.
 - Advocate for effective working relationships between land managers and their local authorised representatives.
 - Advocate for the role of enforcement officers in maintaining community safety and amenity by preventing litter and illegal dumping.

More information on how the network works can be found in our Terms of Reference.

LEON works to see land managers take unified action in preventing and enforcing litter and illegal dumping in the State of Victoria.

LEON works to see respected and skilled enforcement officers working against litter and illegal dumping in the State of Victoria.

Keep Victoria Beautiful first called inadequate litter enforcement to attention in 1972.

Who is LEON?

LEON consists of enforcement officers, land managers and individuals brought together by their concern for litter or illegal dumping.


Officers enforce legislative controls, policies and legislation in their duties to maintain and add to the overall improvement of residential amenity, community safety, and environmental standards within their municipality.


They undertake investigations in relation to identified offences and prepare reports. In an effective and courteous manner, they take appropriate action necessary to rectify identified breaches, prepare correspondence such as notices concerning breaches of acts or regulation.

LEON works to ensure that enforcement officers are valued for their important contribution to community safety and amenity, aligning with community views on enforcement.

Good working relationships between land managers and their local authorised representative are required to combat litter and illegal dumping, with both issues often crossing land management boundaries.

This means LEON also has many unauthorised members concerned with litter and illegal dumping, from waste educators to property developers.

 **89%** of community members are concerned about illegal dumping

 **80%** of community members are concerned about litter

There is strong support for enforcement, with community members calling for:



increased visibility of enforcement officers



land managers finding and penalising more offenders

Officers work in collaboration to protect the safety and amenity of public spaces.

Who makes up LEON?

MEMBERSHIP:



223

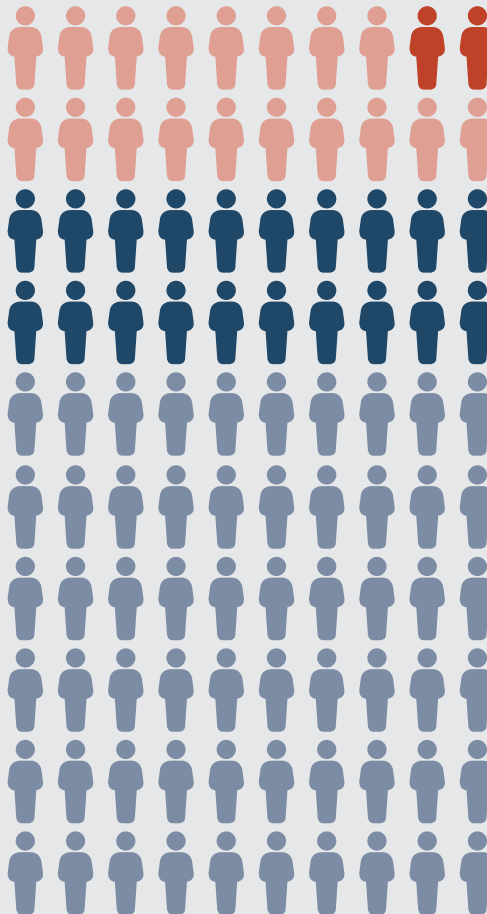
Individual members



68

Organisations

MEMBER COMPOSITION:



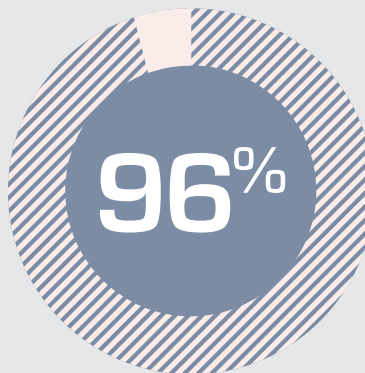
2% property or community development

18% local government executive management

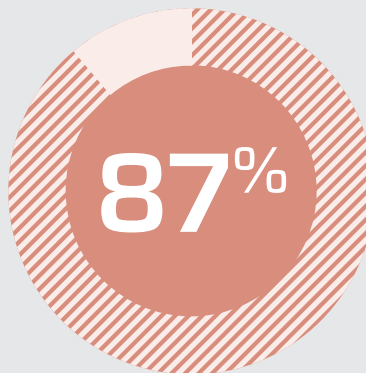
20% environmental management or local laws management officers

60% litter prevention officers

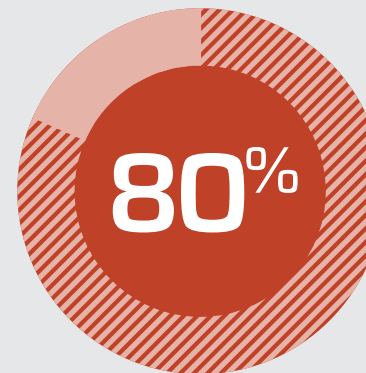
TYPICAL NETWORK MEETING AUDIENCE:



96% of attendees work with waste and enforcement



87% are authorised to enforce against waste offences



80% are authorised and actively enforce against waste offences

Member Profile

AMY PHILLIPS

Amy Phillips, an EPA Officer for Protection of the Local Environment (OPLE), works with the City of Casey and is a member of LEON.

Amy is just one of the many authorised members contributing to LEON.

The EPA OPLE program demonstrates how successful strong working relationships can be in addressing litter and illegal dumping.



Find out more about the EPA OPLE program.

Achievements in 2019

2019 was a year of consolidation and conversation for LEON, preparing the network to support our members in the coming years.

OUR ACTIONS

Introduced a submission system allowing members to submit feedback, suggestions and facilitate discussion in the network.

Introduced the Litterbites newsletter to circulate case studies, member submissions and any other relevant information.

Hosted a member meeting at the Australian Waste Expo where members discussed:

- An update on the Officer for Protection of the Local Environment (OPLE) program.
- Introduction and discussion to the new Act from the EPA.
- Scenario based training – different approaches to enforcement.
- Intervention efficacy for charitable recyclers dealing with illegal dumping.
- The Victorian Litter Plan.
- Community perceptions of enforcement officers in the Regional Litter Plans Community Surveys.

Facilitated questions and feedback on draft regulations, environment reference standards and upcoming Environment Protection Amendment Act 2018.

Updated LEON Terms of Reference

Updated membership structure of LEON

Advocated for litter illegal dumping enforcement at a state and local government level in Victoria.



+31
authorities



+106
members



100%
of submissions answered



Discussed issues with
38
major land managers

Top three benefits of LEON

- 1 Seeing what other members are doing
- 2 Increasing knowledge of working acts
- 3 Exchange of knowledge and skills and networking



Actions in 2020-21

Top three requests from members:

1. More resources to assist with enforcement
2. Enforcement training
3. Help members connect with other land managers

In 2020, LEON will act on everything we have heard.

LEON will continue the Litterbites newsletter and 3 annual members meetings, supporting this with a new website, guides and resources to assist members plus training courses on enforcement and prosecution.

Feedback and suggestion channels for members will be maintained and LEON will continue supporting enforcement officers, contributing to the EPA Waste and Litter Toolkit 2020 and providing further support leading up to the new Act on July 1st 2020.

Additionally, LEON will appoint Regional Representatives to provide regular updates on the overview of litter and illegal dumping throughout Victoria.

To deliver all of this, LEON will have a **new membership structure** from **June 30th 2020**.



Benefits for Individual Members – no cost

- 3 annual members meetings
- Litterbites newsletter



Additional benefits for Organisation Members – \$800 per organisation

- Early access to training courses
- Guides and resources for use within your organisation
 - Improved business case guide, including officer employment framework and pathway
 - Improved best practice enforcement guide
 - Organisational process and team structures resource

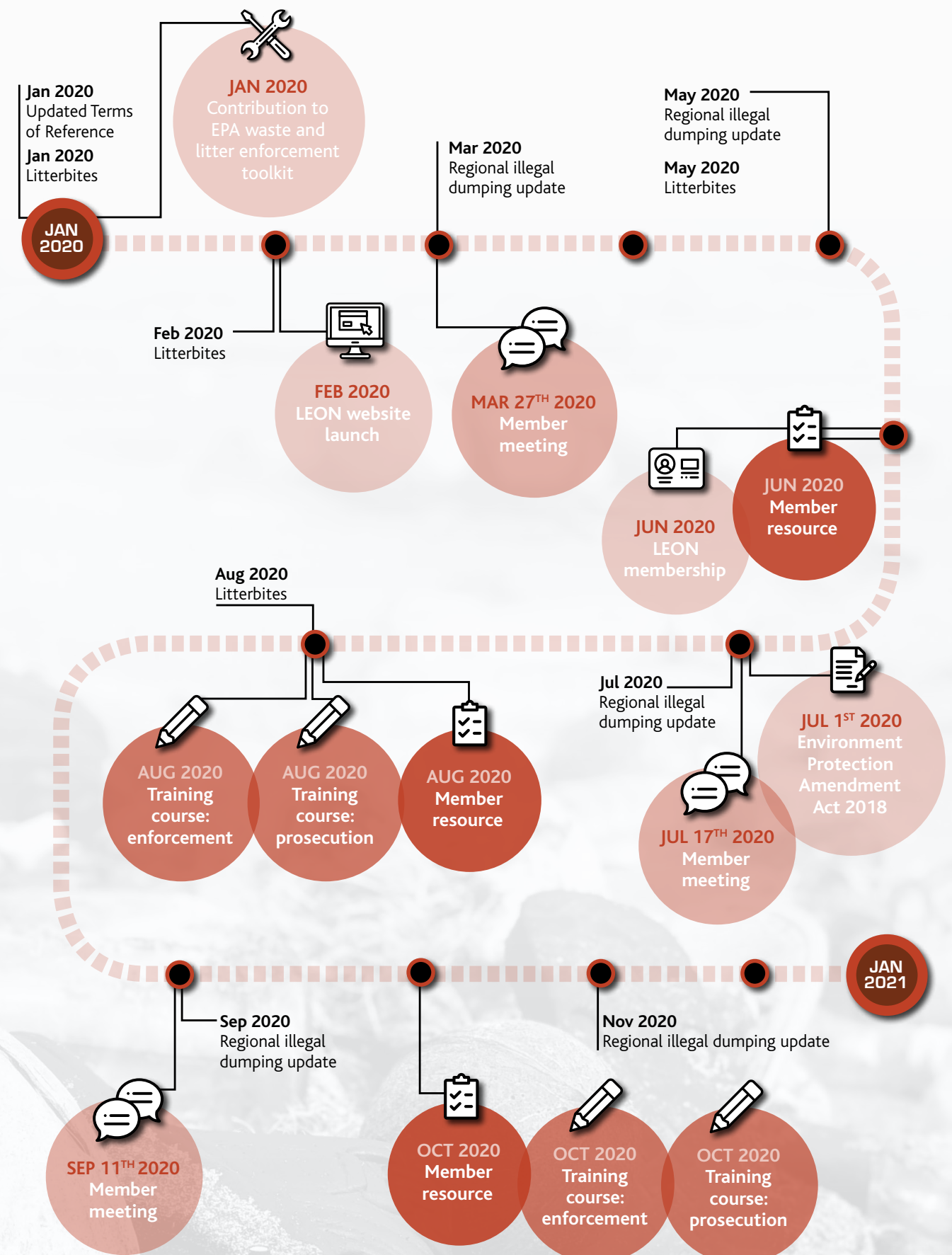


Training courses will also be delivered by authorised officers on a cost recovery basis

- Enforcement training course
- Prosecution training course
- Organisation assessment program: tailored assessment, advice and report on illegal dumping issues for your organisation

2020-2021

LEON timeline



Funding and partners

The Litter Enforcement Officers Network would like to thank all members for their support in submissions, feedback and participation in the network.

Sustainability Victoria has generously funded the continuation of LEON for the 2019/20 period, allowing annual meetings, feedback avenues and newsletters to continue.

The Environment Protection Authority has supported LEON members by delivering expert knowledge, advice and tools to assist members in the lead up to the new Act.

KVB has funded the expansion of LEON for the 2019/20 period, consolidating litter and illegal dumping issues with 38 organisations in Victoria and advocating for litter and illegal dumping at a state and local government level.



**Enforcement:
a central pillar
in reducing
litter and illegal
dumping in
Victoria.**



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ENFORCEMENT
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