



Developing a sustainable GP solution for St George

General Practices across Australia are struggling, particularly in rural and remote locations.

St George is not exempt from these pressures, and it is imperative that GP services in St George can continue to meet the needs of the community in a sustainable way.

Local Health parties South West Hospital & Health Service, Western Queensland Primary Health Network, the St George Medical Centre, along with Balonne Shire Council have come together to explore and identify possible options for a sustainable GP service in St George.

St George Medical Centre Managing Director Alex Benn is heartened by community actions to transition the General Practice in St George to a more sustainable model.

"General Practices across Australia are struggling at the moment, and it has been difficult to maintain a sustainable business model in the face of GP shortages and under the current funding model", said Mr Benn.

"We've seen other rural communities successfully transition to other models that maintain General Practice services for their community.

"I am confident that as a community we can find a solution to maintain General Practice services in St George."

Mayor Samantha O'Toole outlined how important this matter is for residents right across the Shire.

"The provision of health services is not the normal operation of local government, but taking care of the needs of our local community is, which is why we partnered with local health parties to consult with the community on this important issue", said Mayor O'Toole. "This is not just a local issue, it is a national one, and there are other rural communities who have faced a similar issue before implementing different models to maintain the sustainability of their GP services.

"By working together as a community, we can find the solution that fits our needs and deliver a sustainable General Practice services in St George, which will continue to support the ongoing livability of our community.

"I would urge everyone that is interested in keeping GP services sustainable in St George to go to our website to find out the details about the possible path forward for this important issue."

A number of community consultation activities will occur as this issue progresses to allow the community to have their say on developing sustainable GP services in St George.

COMMUNITY DROP-IN SESSIONS – Two Community Drop-in sessions were held on 14 & 15 May. There are two more Community Drop-in sessions being held on the below dates:

- **Tuesday 11 June 4pm-6pm** at the Cultural Centre, St George
- Wednesday 12 June 8am-10am at the Cultural Centre, St George

COMMUNITY SURVEY – This survey is allowing the community to have their say on the possible path forward and can be accessed on the Council website.

For more information on this important initiative, you can contact the Balonne Shire Council on 4620 8888 or the St George Medical Centre on 4625 5344.



What's On

YELLOW BELLY COUNTRY MUSIC FESTIVAL

Come along to St George Yellowbelly Country Music and Poets Festival as this year's festival is extra special, as it's dedicated to the memory of Keith Jamison OAM.

When: 24-30 June 2024

Where: St George Showgrounds

THE TASTE OF BALONNE - BOOK LAUNCH AND DINNER

Come along for action packed entertainment and fun whilst meeting special guests Peter Lewis, Sam Kekovich, heather Ewart and James Bundell

When: 28 June 2024 Where: Hebel Hotel

HEBEL GYMKHANA & MOTORKHANA

The action-packed Hebel Gymkhana and Motorkhana is perfect for all ages! Whether you're riding a horse or a motorbike, enjoy classic competitions like barrels, bending, flags, and even apple bobbing.

When: 29-30 June 2024

Where: Hebel Showgrounds

GRAEME CONNORS - MY LYRICAL LIFE

Master singer-songwriter Graeme Connors is opening his vast catalogue of songs and bringing his new book and concert 'My Lyrical Life' to St George as part of celebrations for his half century in the music industry. For booking and information contact Frank Deshon on 0428 250 968 or Danny Sheehan on 0409 638 765

When: 3 July 2024

Where: St George Cultural Centre

MUNGINDI RACES

The Mungindi Races are perfectly timed with the school holidays for a great family day out.

Live entertainment and a fully licenced bar will be operating into the evening for all race goers.

When: 6 Jul 2024y Where: Mungindi Racecourse

MY COMMUNITY DIARY

Do you want to keep up to date with upcoming events in the Shire?

Upcoming events are listed on the 'My Community Diary', which you can access by clicking the 'What's On' button on the homepage at www.balonne.qld.gov.au

A message from the Mayor

As a Council, we sometimes represent our community on matters that are not the usual domain of a local Council, as we understand that the implications of some issues have the potential to negatively impact our community more broadly if not addressed.

One such issue that was recently brought to our attention, was the viability and sustainability of our local General Practice (Doctors) in St George due to widespread GP shortages and the current funding arrangements. This is not just a local issue, but one facing GP Clinics right across Australia, but particularly in rural areas with lower populations.

The St George GP clinic provides a vital service to clients right throughout our Shire and beyond and losing that service would cause a ripple effect of detrimental impacts to our community in terms of attracting families to our beautiful community.

This is why we acted to join together with South West Hospital & Health Service, Western Queensland Primary Health Network and the St George Medical Centre to commence community consultation to assist in identifying possible options to develop a sustainable model for GP services in St George.

Other rural and regional areas have had success in transitioning their General Practice to more sustainable models of operation and I am confident that together as a community we can find a solution to this highly important issue.

I would urge anyone that wants to support this cause to go to the Council website or our social media pages, come along to our regular Community Drop-in sessions or complete a Community Survey.

On another note, our Council received two awards recently in support of the work it does to support our local community.



The first recognition was an Award for Excellence from the Local Government Managers of Australia for the collaborative work undertaken to deliver the highly successful Wild Dog Exclusion Fencing Program. A recent report outlined how this program really has been a win-win for local farmers and the community with an estimated \$100 million increase in agricultural income and 230 extra jobs in our Shire.

The other recognition was an award for the coveted Regional Member of the Year at the Queensland Small Business Friendly Awards. This is a great recognition of the collaborative approach we undertake with local businesses to deliver the broad range of initiatives like the business improvement and mentoring programs, workforce development programs and a whole range of others.

I would like to express my thanks to everyone involved in these programs that received recognition, as your ongoing commitment and collaboration with Council helps us to deliver programs that benefit all of our community.

Samantha O'Toole



Celebrating Our Volunteers

Volunteering is such a crucial part of life in small communities like ours.

In our Shire, we are very fortunate to have a broad range of volunteers that continually support local initiatives, such as community services/events, sporting clubs and emergency services.

During National Volunteer Week, we proudly held a week of events that

celebrated the various contributions of our local Balonne Volunteers.

The great volunteering opportunities in our Shire are endless and can help to broaden your social circles and help to support our communities.

If you are interested in volunteering, reach out to your local community groups and learn what is available!





Feasibility study in major equine & events centre



Council is currently undertaking a feasibility study into the possible development of a major Equine and Events Centre in the Shire, to facilitate major local and regional events.

The feasibility study will involve a thorough assessment of the current events held across the Shire that might utilise such a facility, as well as major regional events that might be attracted to such a facility in the Shire.

The study will also assess the financial viability of developing such a facility, along with the possible management options.

Over the coming months, consultation will be undertaken with showground user groups and community groups with a potential interest in using such a facility.

If the feasibility study identifies such a facility as a viable option, the next steps would involve the identification of suitable land, developing a detailed concept design, community consultation and preparation of a suitable grant funding application.

Council improves facilities in The Hub



Improvements to The Hub in St George are now complete and the more user-friendly facilities will be a drawcard for students, residents and visitors.

The improvements to The Hub facilities included the addition of new lights and incorporated CCTV cameras to improve nighttime access and security.

The improved facilities are for the benefit of our students who access the CUC after hours and security of the parking area.

EVENT SEASON is here!

Our Shire will be buzzing with events over the next few months!

The usual hum of cattle and cotton trucks will be moving up a gear with our friendly caravaners, travellers and lifelong visitors rolling in.

The attractions of our Shire will be complimented by a number of events with something for everyone.

Our local accommodations will be run off their feet, book in fast so you don't miss out!

EVENTS & FUNDRAISERS

ROYAL FLYING DOCTOR SERVICE RALLY – 7 June, St George

VAUXHALL CAR CLUB – 26 June, St George

YELLOWBELLY COUNTRY MUSIC FESTIVAL – 24 to 30 *June, St George*

THE TASTES OF BALONNE – 28 June, The Hebel Hotel, Hebel

HEBEL GYMKHANA & MOTORKHANA – 29 to 30 June. Hebel Showgrounds

ST GEORGE RUGBY UNION LADIES DAY – 6 July, Rowden Park

For more information Frillnecks Facebook Page

MUNGINDI RACES - 6 July, Mungindi Racecourse

BOLLON POLOCROSSE - 6 to 7 July, Bollon Showgrounds

ST GEORGE CUP RACES – 27 July, St George Jockey Club

DIRRANBANDI POLOCROSSE CARNIVAL – 27 to 28 July, Dirranbandi Showgrounds

MUNGINDI SHOW – 9 August to 11 August, Mungindi Racecourse

SOUTH AUSTRALIA VARIETY BASH – 14 August, St George

VICTORIAN VARIETY BASH – 19 August, St George

DIRRANBANDI CAMPDRAFT – 23 to 25 August, Dirranbandi Showgrounds

BALONNE CUTTING HORSE FUTURITY – 25 August to 8 September, St George Showgrounds

STORYFEST SOUTH WEST - 26 to 28 August, St George

THALLON TEAM TRUCK PULL - 31 August, Thallon

BOLLON CAMPDRAFT & RODEO – 31 August to 1 September, Bollon Showgrounds

Balonne awarded Regional Member of the Year at the Queensland Small Business Awards

Balonne Shire has scooped the coveted Regional Member of the Year Award at the 4th Annual Queensland Small Business Friendly Awards ceremony in Cairns for its proactive support of the Shire's 900 small businesses

These awards brought together 49 Councils, with Balonne Shire Council receiving the top regional award for its role in working collaboratively with the business community to identify the needs and opportunities for small business in the Shire.

This Award recognises Council's programs and initiatives for small businesses, which include its business mentoring and improvement programs, beautification programs, workforce development, digital connectivity and procurement enhancements.

Mayor Samantha O'Toole was delighted that Council has received acknowledgement for its efforts to support the local business community.

"As a Council, we aim to work collaboratively with our local business community to ensure that Balonne is a great place to do business," said Mayor O'Toole.



From Left to Right Queensland Small Business Commissioner Dominique Lamb, Balonne Shire Council's Communities Manager Angelina Niven, Balonne Shire Council's Economic Development Manager Garnet Radford, Queensland Minister for Employment Small Business & Training Lance McCallum

"By supporting local business with initiatives like the business improvement and mentoring programs and workforce development we are helping to generate more employment and improve liveability in our Shire."

Balonne receives Award For Excellence for Ambitious Wild Dog Fencing Program

Balonne Shire Council has been awarded the Local Government Managers of Australia's 2024 Award for Excellence in the Sustainability category for its ambitious and highly successful Wild Dog Exclusion Fencing Program.

The LGMA Awards for Excellence recognise the best of local government initiatives in the state, noting the differing environments and communities that local government serves.

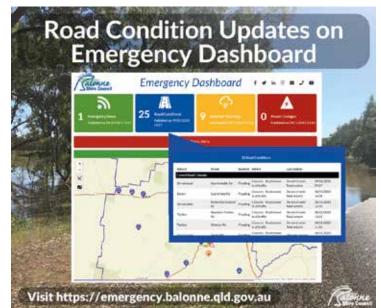
Mayor Samantha O'Toole was delighted to be acknowledged for this program and credited the result as a collaborative effort from Council and landholders.

"This is a great result, but we really need to acknowledge everyone who participated in this program, which is delivering some outstanding benefits for participants and the broader community", said Mayor O'Toole.



Council's Director of Community and Environmental Services, Digby Whyte accepting the Award on behalf of Council.





Balonne welcomes decision to protect Great Artesian Basin

Balonne Shire Council welcomes the decision by Queensland Department of Environment, Science and Innovation to reject a proposal by Glencore to inject industrial waste into the Great Artesian Basin.

Foreign-owned mining giant Glencore, had put forward a proposal to inject 330,000 tonnes of industrial waste into one of Australia's greatest natural assets – the Great Artesian Basin, which is the lifeblood of communities and agriculture in 60% of the State's land mass.

Balonne Shire Council joined together with 23 other Council's to voice our objection to this risky proposal that could've put at risk the health and wellbeing of our local communities from generational damage to their drinking water.

Balonne Shire Mayor Samantha O'Toole welcomed the decision by Queensland's environmental regulators to reject this



risky proposal.

"This decision is a great relief to our community and everyone that relies on the Great Artesian Basin as a source of clean water for drinking and agricultural production", said Mayor O'Toole.

"The Great Artesian Basin is the lifeblood of rural and regional communities and deserves protection from risky industrial waste dumping schemes.

ENVIRO-COLUMN Wild Dogs

The term wild dog refers collectively to purebred dingoes, dingo hybrids and domestic dogs that have escaped or been deliberately released.

Wild dog control methods include baiting, trapping, shooting, fencing, and the use of guardian animals to protect stock. A planned strategy using a combination of these methods that also considers wild dog

behavior will enable effective management. To find out more follow the QR code -





Council's Community Catch-ups

Council is holding a series of Community Catch-up days to allow all members of the community the opportunity to talk face-to-face with Council and gain an understanding of all the Council initiatives currently underway throughout the Shire.

The first round of Community Catch-up days in July will give local residents the opportunity to meet all of the Councillors for the 2024-28 term and include an update on all of the Council Budget initiatives for 2024-25.

Meet your Councillors & Budget Update

- **16 JULY** Mungindi 12:30pm-3pm Thallon 4pm-6pm
- 23 JULY Bollon 12:30pm-2:30pm St George 4:30pm-6:30pm
- **30 JULY** Hebel 1pm-2pm Dirranbandi 4pm- 6pm



Six local business secure best of Queensland Awards

Six local businesses secured the coveted position on Tourism and Events Queensland's 'Best of Queensland' list for 2024.

The local Balonne Shire businesses that made it onto this Best of Queensland list are:

- Francis Hotel, Thallon
- Sandytown River Cruises, St George
- Hebel Hotel & General Store, Hebel
- Jacaranda Country Motel, St George
- Nindigully Pub, Nindigully
- Pelican Rest Tourist Park, St George

This is an outstanding result for our region, especially in light of the fact that one business, the Francis Hotel in Thallon, has received this award 4 years running.

A massive congratulations to these very deserving businesses for doing us all proud!





Wednesday July 3 Thursday July 4 Friday July 5 Saturday July 6 Sunday July 7

Tuesday July 9 Wednesday July 10 Thursday July 11 Saturday July 13

St George Cultural Centre Hall Roma Cultural Centre Charleville Town Hall Blackall Cultural Centre Drover's place at Stockman's Hall of Fame Longreach Winton Shire Hall Mount Isa Civic Centre Hughenden Entertainment Centre Mackay Entertainment Centre

Tickets online - www.graemeconnors.com

St George Foreshore Furniture Revitalisation



The St George Foreshore has recently been improved with new furniture, including three picnic shelters, two BBQ shelters, and one park bench.

This upgrade, aimed at improving and rebuilding the community's outdoor experience, with a total cost of \$100,000, was funded by a \$60,000 allocation from the council's budget, supplemented by a \$40,000 grant funded from the Queensland Government.

These new additions are expected to provide comfortable and convenient spots for social gatherings, family outings, and recreational activities, encouraging a vibrant and welcoming environment along the foreshore.

This was funded by Queensland Government Emergency Response Fund Recovery and Resilience 2021-22 Program – Recovery Grant.

THE LIBRARY LENS

Balonne Shire Libraries are free to join as a part of the Rural Libraries Queensland and services to over 2000 people each month.

New craft activities are planned for the winter school holidays, with special guests for NAIDOC activities.

Staff are 'genrefying' the collection to make finding your favourites easier and discovering new ones simpler.

The Story fest Southwest programme is out now, so be sure to check it out. Scan the QR code for details:



BOOK of the MONTH

Black Sheep by Judy Nunn

"...a sweeping historical novel of a prosperous sheep-farming family and the enigmatic young man with a dark past they let into their lives..."



Council's Authorised Inspection Program is now underway 1 May 2024 to 30 June 2024

Every allotment will be inspected to check on the following:

Registration of Dogs

Black Sheep

- Permits for the keeping of Other Animals
- Permits for the keeping of Stock Dogs
- Overgrown allotments

For more information, contact Council 07 4620 8888





COMPLETED WORKS THROUGH MAY

1. Koomalah Road

WORKS CURRENTLY UNDERWAY

- Narine Rd
 - Expected completion: late June
 - Construction is ongoing.
 - Expected traffic delays less than 5 minutes.
- Jakelwar-Goodooga Rd South
 - Expected completion: mid-July
 - Construction is ongoing.
 - Expected traffic delays less than 5 minutes.
- Jakelwar-Goodooga Rd North
 - Expected completion: late September
 - Construction is ongoing.
 - Expected traffic delays less than 5 minutes.

- Whyenbah Rd
- Expected completion: early June
- Construction is ongoing.
- Expected traffic delays less than 5 minutes.
- UPCOMING GRADING WORKS Eumerella South Road



Calonne **RESPECT** LIBRA PROP OUR **RESPECT OUR SPACE** LIBRARY CHILDREN OF SCHOOL AGE MAY NOT USE The Library During School Hours, HELP EVERYONE **ENJOY THEIR UNLESS ACCOMPANIED BY A PARENT OR** LIBRARY RULES TEACHER EXPERIENCE **BE MINDFUL OF** WALK APPROPRIATE NO PLAYING IN OTHERS WHEN THE HUB OR USE OF USING DEVICES DON'T RUN TECHNOLOGY NO PHOTOS OR VIDEOTAPING **USE YOUR INSIDE VOICE** IF YOU MOVE IT. PUT IT BACK **USE APPROPRIATE LANGUAGE CLEAN UP BERFORE YOU LEAVE BE KIND AND CARING NO FEET ON FURNITURE** LIBRARY STAFF MAY REQUIRE CHILDREN THANK LEAVE BIKES & SCOOTERS **BELOW THE AGE OF 12 TO BE ACCOMPANIED** IN THE RACK OUTSIDE BY A PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR THEM OF AGE **18 OR OLDER** YOU WILL BE ASKED TO LEAVE IF THESE RULES ARE NOT RESPECTED & FOLLOWED

FUN AND FITNESS IN BALONNE

SQUASH

St George Squash play every Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday night. If you'd like to join in the fun and enjoy a hit, reach out to John on 0428 735 944.

ST GEORGE TENNIS CLUB

Anyone keen on having a hit of tennis? The St George Tennis Club holds fixtures on Thursday evenings at 6:30pm in Rowden Park, St George



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and they sometimes have reserve spots available.

For more information, contact Debbie on 0488 042 951

BOXING

Sign up to be a member of In the Box Boxing Club! come down and work on your fitness or prepare for fights.

For more information, contact John Morris on 0411 857 691.

GROUP TRAINING SESSIONS

If you're really looking to get in great shape for summer, you can head along to an Optimal Training, group training session in the



IN THE BOX BOXING

CLUB

Amphitheatre on St George's Terrace, St George on Tuesday, and Thursday evenings from 5-6pm.

For more information, contact Deanne on 0407 720 327.

INSPIRED FITNESS WITH TJ

Inspired fitness runs group training sessions on Tuesday at 10:00am and 5:30pm (Pilates), and 5:30pm on Thursdays (Tone class). Classes are now held at the St Patrick's Church Hall on Balonne Street. Classes started on the 14th May. As space is limited bookings are required.



For more information, phone Tori 0447 080 872

PARKRUN

Do you love a social run to get in shape? There is a free Parkrun held each Saturday morning at

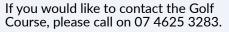


7am along the St George foreshore leaving from the boat ramp on the Western end of St George's Terrace.

For more information visit www.parkrun.com.au/ stgeorge

ST GEORGE GOLF CLUB

Enjoy a swing of Golf anytime at the St George Golf Club. Regarded as one of the best sand greens courses in SWQ why wouldn't you spend a day here?





ST GEORGE BOWLS



social bowls, all welcome. Green available on Saturdays for casual bowlers

ST GEORGE NETBALL ASSOCIATION

The A grade Competition on Monday nights from 5:30pm has commenced. The C Grade & B Grade competition and Netta is up and running on Saturdays.



Training for C Grade & B Grade is Thursday Afternoons, with C2 at 4pm, C1 at 5pm & B Grade at 6pm.

For all enquiries, please contact the St George Netball Club via email stgeorgenetball@gmail.com or 0413084891.

ST GEORGE RLFC SAINTS

Training has kicked off for the St George RLFC Saints head down to Rowden Park every Tuesday and Thursday at 6:30pm for some fitness or a social outing.



For more information, contact 0427 949 196 or stgrlfc@hotmail.com

ST GEORGE HASH HOUSE HARRIERS - SOCIAL RUNNING GROUP.

Enjoy a social run or walk of a Thursday evening! The group leave from The Terrace in front of The Australian Hotel at 6:00pm on Thursdays for a 5km run or a 3km walk, this is not a timed event.

For more information contact Peter on 0428 258 601

If you have a fitness program or club in the Shire that you would like posted here, please send the details to media@balonne.qld.gov.au



Out and About in Balonne

















Hebel Speed Shear



























St George State School 150 year celebration

















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Goondir Health Wellbeing Centre Opening























Balonne Bulletin 15

Balonne Shire Job opportunities *May/June 2024*



Council Positions Available St George & Surrounds	COUNCIL IS HIRING!	Batching Plant Labourer/Agitator Driver St George SAFEWAY EXCAVATIONS Image: Constant of the plant o
Store Person St George	AGNVET RURAL The primary purpose of this role is to undertake general warehousing duties, including receiving, storing and delivering agricultural products to customers. The incumbent will have specific responsibility or the maintenance of the yards, shop and warehouse areas. Above Award salary, plus superannuation, and generous staff discount. Enthusiastic and approachable. Customer service, time management and planning skills required. Manually handle stock up to 30kg safely, LF Forklift (or willingness to	Agitator Driver SAFEWAY EXCAVATIONS St George Full time Casual Responsibilities include driving agitator vehicle and keeping vehicles and plant clean and tidy. After hours and weekend work may be required at times. Hours are flexible and wages negotiable. Training provided. Contact Ron Irwin on 0417 602 170 or email ron.irwin@ safewayexcavations.com
	obtain). Experience in Agribusiness sector and holding an MR Truck Licence will be highly regarded. A covering letter outlining your relevant experience should be forwarded along with your resume and two work-related referees, to jobs@pursehouserural.com.au. For further information, please contact Branch Manager Scott Haynes on 0429 473 071 or Elaine Alker in the Employee Relations and Safety Team on 0439 374 400.	Apprentice Carpenter St George St George St Contact Ron Irwin on 0417 602 170 or email ron.irwin@
Disability Support Worker/Home Care Support St George Region	INDIGICARE CONNECT Casual As a Disability Support Worker within the St George Region, you will provide support for our Participants and their families/carers. Diversity is a key descriptor of the role and you will experience variety and rewarding shifts. You will provide Participants with innovative, flexible and high-quality support to enhance their lifestyle, learning and vocational opportunities. \$32.73-\$40.26 per hour (SCHADS AWARD). Experience desirable. For more information, phone: 07 4625 1742 or email hr@ indigicareconnect.com.au	For more information on local jobs SCANTHIS OR CODE
Service Manager St George	ST GEORGE MACHINERY CENTRE Full time We are seeking a highly motivated and organised service manager to join the SGMC team. The Service Manager will serve as the point of contact between a business and its prospects or clients and have a range of responsibilities including maintaining customer satisfaction, booking service repairs, leading a workshop, diagnosing repairs, etc. Wage aligns with experience. Email: cameron@sgmc.com.au or call 07 4625 3633 for more information.	If you have a position you would like placed in this section, please contact Balonne Shire Council's Workforce Development Officer: Karen on 4620 8839. This Balonne Shire Council initiative is proudly supported by the Queensland Government through its Growing Workforce Participation Fund.

2024 Upcoming Courses

WORKING AT HEIGHTS TRAINING

Get accredited to work safely at heights, keep yourself and your team safe when working from rooftops, ladders, silos and more.

Where: St George

When: 13 June 2024

To register, contact Gateway to Training on 07 4671 2258

CONFINED SPACE TRAINING

Confined Space Training will provide you with the knowledge plus practical skills to safely enter and work in a confined space, work in accordance with an issued permit, and carry out gas testing of an atmosphere

Where: St George

When: 14 June 2024

To register, contact Gateway to Training on 07 4671 2258

FORKLIFT LICENCE

Gain the skills, knowledge, and accreditation to get your forklift licence, make sure to book as numbers are limited.

Where: St George

When: 16 - 18 July 2024

To register, contact Gateway to Training on 07 4671 2258

FIRST AID & CPR

From snake bites to burns, heart attacks to head injuries, gain the skills and confidence to handle most workplace and day-to-day emergencies and administer basic first aid by undertaking first aid and CPR training.

Where: St George

When: 20 July 2024

To register, contact Gateway to Training on 07 4671 2258

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