



**Policy Subject/Title:** Style Guide (internal and external documents)

**Policy Number:** C / 021

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**Responsible Officer:** Communications and Marketing Manager

**Related Policies / Procedures:** C002 Advertising  
C020 Social Media  
Brand Identity Guidelines

**Authorised by:** Somerset Regional Council

**Authorised on:** 28 November 2012 (Doc Id 647314)

**Review / Amendment dates:** 13 March 2013 (Doc Id 665017)  
11 July 2013 (Doc Id 711676 / no amendment)  
28 May 2014 (Doc Id 757348)  
13 July 2016 (Doc Id 896343)  
11 March 2020 (Doc Id 1185704)

## **1. OBJECTIVE**

This Style Guide complements Somerset Regional Council's corporate logo Brand Identity Guidelines adopted by Council in 2008 during the amalgamation of Esk and Kilcoy Shire Council's.

This Style Guide should be used in conjunction with Council's Brand Identity Guidelines.

This style guide is a set of standards for the writing and design of Council documents (media releases, internal and external documents, posters and other publicity materials) across all Council departments.

The style guide aims to create uniformity in Council documents (internal and external) and ensure all Council documents are easily identifiable through similar style, size and format.

A style guide creates uniformity in all documents and formatting while maintaining a professional outlook internally and externally.

The Australia Government Style Manual (sixth edition) can also be consulted as an additional reference tool.

## **2. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure all staff are aware of Council's commitment to publishing professional internal and external documents.

The Style Guide will ensure uniformity across all Council publications and help establish Somerset Regional Council as a trusted and well-known brand in the community.

## **3. SCOPE**

This policy applies to all Council documents produced by or on behalf of Council staff and any other use of Council's corporate logo, as approved.

## **4. POLICY**

### **4.1 Use of Somerset Regional Council corporate logo**

The Somerset Regional Council logo as identified in the Brand Identity Guidelines must be used on every Council document, communication material or publication that is intended for public display and/or circulation.

Manipulation or variations of the corporate logo are not permitted.

The corporate logo must be used in its entirety as "Somerset Regional Council" on all documents.

The 'S' symbol may not be used on its own or in colours other than blue, green, white or black unless on street signs or otherwise instructed or approved by the CEO.

Correct logo size and allowable colour variations are stipulated in the Brand Identity Guidelines.

As a general rule the Council logo can only be used with the colours blue, green, black or white. No other colour is allowed unless approved by the CEO.

External agencies, community organisations, individuals or Councillors are not permitted to use the Somerset Regional Council logo without prior written consent from the CEO. Exceptions are community groups or individuals who are a recipient of Council's Community Assistance Grant (CAG) program and are in receipt of a letter from Council which outlines the appropriate use of council's logo.

The logo "Somerset Region" is not permitted to be used on any Council material other than Main Roads signs welcoming residents to the region or street signage around the Somerset region.

When Council is sponsoring an event, the Somerset Regional Council logo must be used (not Somerset Region) and approval to use the logo must be approved by Council's CEO.

The words 'sponsored by' above the corporate logo is permitted and encouraged when Council is sponsoring an event.

#### **4.2 Use of other logos within Somerset Regional Council but not the corporate logo**

Somerset Regional Council has several other logos/slogans independent of Council's corporate logo in circulation. They include:

- Active and Healthy Somerset (logo), used by Council's Sport and Recreation department
- Somerset Rail Trail Fun Run or Ride (logo), used by Council's Sport and Recreation department
- Somerset Libraries, More than you think (slogan), used by Somerset Libraries
- Somerset. Real Country. Real Adventure (slogan), used by council's tourism and HR department.
- Experience Somerset (slogan and design element), used by Council to promote tourism. The design element must be used in accordance with its Brand Identity Guidelines and external use of the Experience Somerset brand will be approved on a case by case basis, in accordance with council guidelines.
- Somerset Art Beat Festival, logo used by council through the tourism department and Creative Arts Alliance to promote the Somerset Art Beat Festival held annually at the Somerset Regional Art Gallery – The Condensery in Toogoolawah.

Each of the above approved logos/slogans must be used at all times in conjunction with Council's corporate logo. The only exception applies to the tourism brand, when approved by Council management.

Positioning of equal size and prominence must be given to both the independent logo and Council's corporate logo on all documents and promotional material.

#### **4.3 Font, sizing and general layout of Council documents**

- Council uses Arial as its preferred font type for all external and internal documents with the exception of creative art documents used for promotional purposes of council

events or activities.

- This font should be used in the general body of text documents in size 11 and size 14 for headlines.
- Council promotional material and flyers where creativity is encouraged will maintain corporate branding at all times with use of council's logo and design elements reflective of council's brand.
- Consultation with Council's communications and marketing department is required to ensure communication material is in line with Council's brand identity prior to seeking final approval from their departmental director or CEO especially when the document is a promotional flyer, handout or information leaflet. This ensures consistency with council's brand identity and corporate image.
- Council report' (annual report, officer reports and draft policies) must all conform to the style guide.
- All documents (promotional flyers, etc) that are a Council event or program and will be distributed externally (electronically, or in hard copy) must adhere to this style guide and must be proofed and approved by Council through the communications and marketing department before implementation or printing.
- Clip art is not permitted on Council documents.
- Only professional images are to be used, unless prior approval to use a caricature is granted. Council subscribes to an image gallery where professional images can be purchased for promotional purposes. If images are required for a report, flyer, promotional leaflet or for online publicity please consult with the communications and marketing department for appropriate images so the correct licences are purchased
- If no appropriate template is available, consult with the communications and marketing department to develop a template in accordance with Council Style Guide.
- Documents, flyers or forms published on Council's website must also conform to the Style Guide.
- Italics and bold are not permitted unless:
  - Bold is used to further highlight a heading
  - Italics is used to reference legislation in a letter or Council document
- Capitals should not be used in headings unless it is the first letter in a sentence or correct spelling of a person's name
- Council documents should not include a variety of colours (there are exemptions for special events and promotional material for events).
- As a general rule, avoid page borders.
- Avoid headers and footers (unless headers or footers are required for referencing, notes or page numbers).
- Council documents will not be hand written – always use a template for any outward correspondence (With compliments, letters, invitations, envelopes, labels etc).

- All envelopes must have a printed label attached displaying the addressee and postal address. Templates have been automatically set up in all Council's label printers.
- Only window faced envelopes do not require a label attached. Window faced envelopes should only be used for letters where the addressee is shown on the printed letter.
- Templates must conform to Council style (font, size, preferred layout).
- Use appropriate templates for design of forms, posters, letters, invitations, DL brochures, etc. These templates are in word and are in the approved style.
- All forms must be Quality Assured and adhere to the style guide and brand identity guidelines.

#### **4.4 General writing rules**

This applies to Council correspondence and publications (internal and external):

- Never use symbols (@ & #). Always use the appropriate word (at, and, number)
- Always use "phone" instead of Please Call, Please phone, etc. Do not use the word telephone
- Do not use American spelling
- Use program not programme
- Use organisation not organization
- Do not use "shall", use "will" in all posters and Council correspondence unless shall is used in the building or engineering context
- When citing websites do not include "www" before the web address (consistency)
- Numbers between one and nine must always be spelt out never use 1-9
- Numbers over 10 should be numerals
- Never start a sentence with a number
- When referencing use Harvard style.
- Phone numbers should be written for landlines as (07) 5424 4000 (four and four) and mobile numbers should be written as 0467 096 788 (four, three and three).
- Always use brackets when referring to the area code in a phone number – (07)
- Area code does not need to be used if promotional material or correspondence is only being circulated in Queensland.
- Do not state the obvious. If you want to be contacted via email say "Contact Jo Blogs on [mail@somerset.qld.gov.au](mailto:mail@somerset.qld.gov.au) not "contact Jo Blogs on email at ....."

- All Council correspondence sent to external contacts must be sent from 'Somerset Regional Council' using the [mail@somerset.qld.gov.au](mailto:mail@somerset.qld.gov.au) address and not individual work emails.
- All correspondence must be registered in line with Council's Records Policy
- All letters sent on behalf of Somerset Regional Council must be addressed as Dear Mr, Mrs, Miss, Ms not Dear (first name)

As a general rule: simple is best. If you can say it in less words, do.

#### **4.5 Dates and times**

- Dates should always be written date/month/year, for example 26 March 2012
- If using a day as well as the date separate the two by use of a comma. For example, Wednesday, 21 November 2012
- Never use *th* or *st* after a number unless part of an annual event title – eg 12<sup>th</sup> annual Somerset Rail Trail Fun Run or Ride
- Times should always be written as time with a single dot separating hour and minutes, for example 2.31am
- Never say 12 midday or 12 noon. Only say midday, noon or 12pm. To say both is redundant
- If the time is at an exact hour write the time as 3pm. Time does not require zeros after the number – (3.00pm)
- If the time is written in table format where some times are, as an example, 10.15am then for consistency purposes 10:00am with zeros is permitted
- Write times with am or pm (lower case). Do not use 24-hour time.
- When stating times say either at 3pm or about 3.30pm never say at about 3.30. It is one or the other not both.
- There is no space between the time and am/pm. Correct style is: 3.30pm
- Do not use: between numbers, only one full stop. Correct style is 3.30pm not 3:30pm.

#### **4.6 Contact details and email signatures**

- Council's general number, email address and web address must always be used on all correspondence (media releases, email signatures, promotional flyers, etc).
- The only time Council Staff are permitted to publicise a direct line, email address or mobile number is with approval from their departmental manager or director.
- Logos of any kind are not permitted on email signatures nor are direct phone lines, emails or mobiles (unless approved by respective departmental manager or director or otherwise approved by the CEO).

#### **4.7 Promotional materials**

- All promotional materials must include Council's corporate logo.
- Promotional materials must be approved by relevant departmental manager and must conform to the Style Guide.
- Should be developed in consultation with council's communications and marketing department.

#### **4.8 Australian Government Style Guide**

- The Australian Government Style Manual, Sixth Edition, Revised by Snooks and Co and written by John Wiley and Sons Australia, will be used in addition to Council's style guide, if further style guidance is required. This book is an in-depth resource that covers writing and editing requirements, legal and compliance aspects of publishing and more.

### **5. EFFECTIVE FROM**

This policy is effective from 27 November 2012.

### **6. DATE OF RESOLUTION**

This policy was approved by the Chief Executive Office and adopted by the Somerset Regional Council at the Ordinary Meeting of 11 March 2020.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized, cursive script that is difficult to decipher but appears to be a personal name.

Date: 11 March 2020