

A hand in a white glove, wearing a dark red sleeve with gold embroidery, is pulling a rich red velvet curtain to the left. The background is a light cream color. Overlaid on the right side of the image is the text 'VA STATE SOIL' in a large, blue, serif font.

# VA STATE SOIL

Noel Schoknecht, ASC Working Group  
and parochial sandgroper



# VA STATE SOIL



# Wait a second...

We need some background

The concept of state/territory soils?

State and territories, for a long time, have proclaimed  
plant and animal state emblems.



Western  
Australia  
for example

Bird: Black swan



State and territories, for a long time, have proclaimed  
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Australia  
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Animal: Numbat

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Plant: Red and green kangaroo paw

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Western  
Australia  
for example



Fossil: Gogo fish





State and territories, for a long time, have proclaimed  
plant and animal state emblems.



Western  
Australia  
for example



Marine animal: Whale shark



Why not a state or territory soil?

A soil that characterises the state or territory

A soil that characterises the state or territory

Is unique from the others



A soil that characterises the state or territory

Is unique from the others

Something quintessential .....

After the publication of the new  
Australian Soil Classification in 1996  
the Working Group on Land Resource Assessment  
(now the National Committee on Soil and Terrain)  
thought:

“it’s time”



So the quest began...

Let's do a tour of the country  
to see how we went



Clockwise  
(of course)



# NORTHERN TERRITORY



Photo credit: Tony Feder

Vast, rugged and dramatic landscapes, it's the "real Outback"

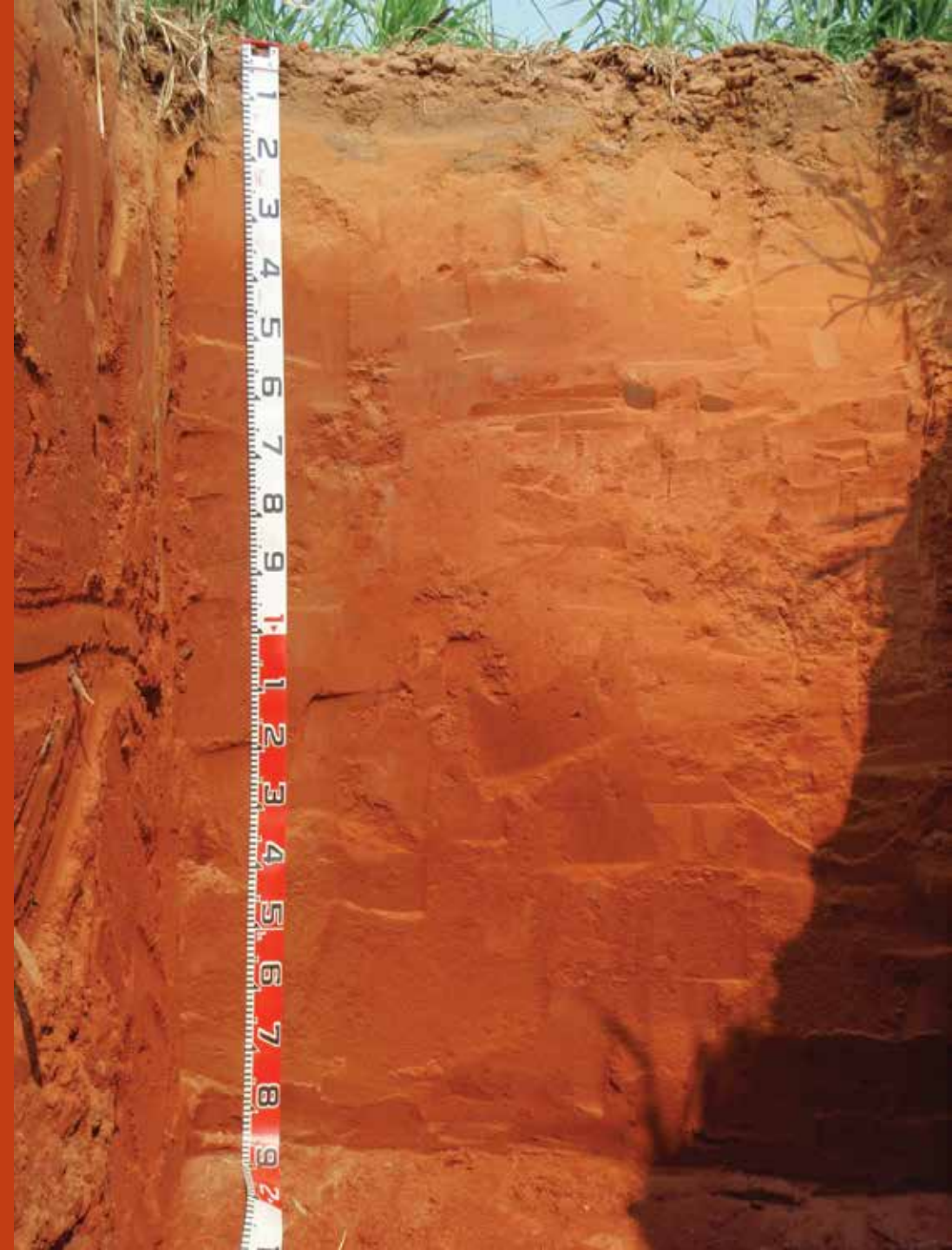


# NORTHERN TERRITORY

Red, massive or weakly structured  
sandy to loamy soils without a  
texture contrast.

NT's “state” soil is a

KANDOSOL



# QUEENSLAND



Diamantina River. Photo credit: Alan Davison

Endless inland plains with braided, entangled river systems



# QUEENSLAND

Deep, dark cracking clays dominate.

Queensland's state soil is a

## VERTOSOL



Photo: Andrew Biggs



# NEW SOUTH WALES



Photo credit: jovannig

The Central West – an agricultural powerhouse.

# NEW SOUTH WALES

Fertile, fantastic, red  
texture-contrast soils abound.

New South Wale's state soil is a

RED CHROMOSOL





# AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

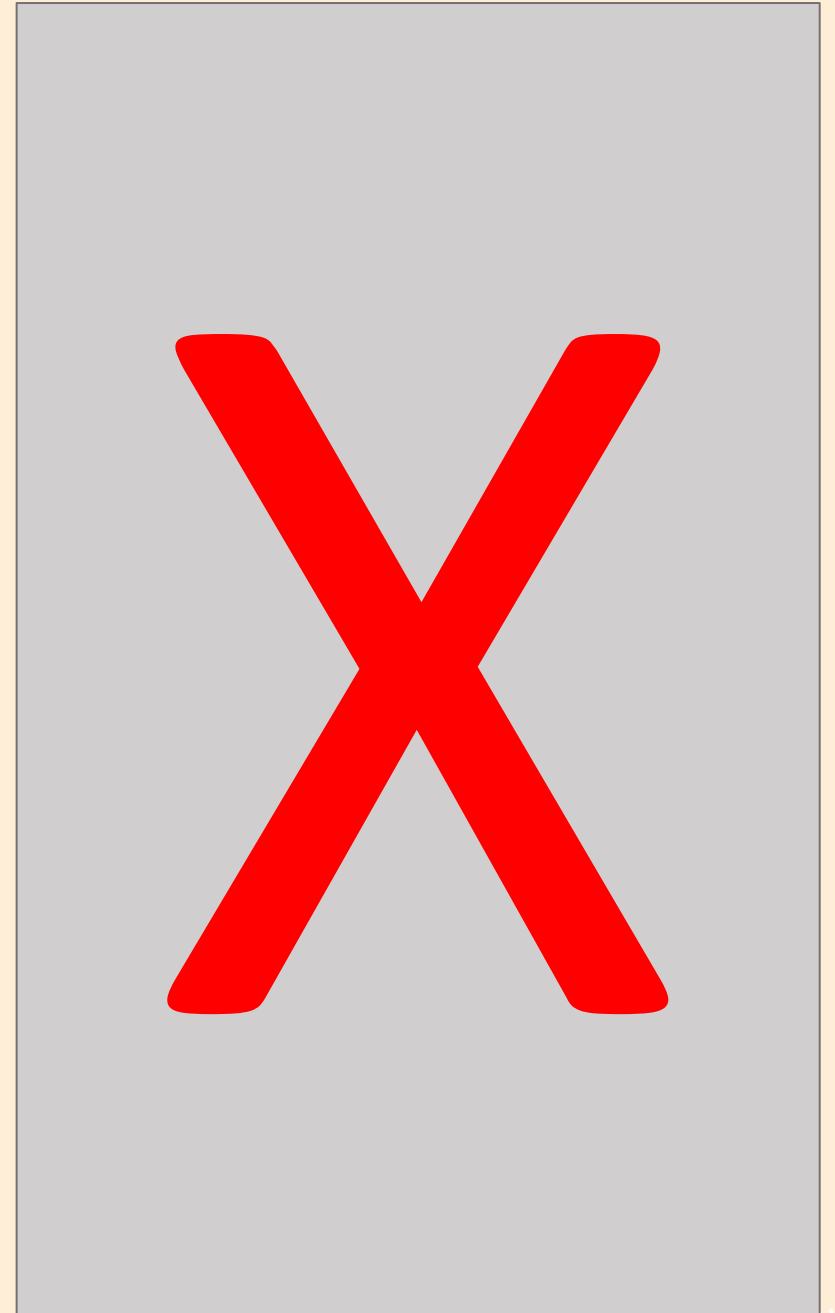


The political potpourri of the nation

# AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

Unfortunately our political powerhouse has been too busy to offer up a state soil selection – we're still hoping!

Maybe a RUDOSOL?





# VICTORIA



Photo credit: Mark Imhof

Sodic soils prone to gully and tunnel erosion:  
once a challenge, now a triumph

# VICTORIA

Sodic and sensitive

Victoria's erodible texture-contrast  
soils make the cut.

Victoria's state soil is a

MOTTLED BROWN SODOSOL



Photo: Mark Imhof



# TASMANIA



Photo credit: Chris Grose

## Super spuds in spectacular settings



# TASMANIA

Red. Deep. Friable

So good you could eat them!  
Iron-rich structured red-brown soils  
on mafic igneous rocks.

Tasmania's state soil is a

**FERROSOL**



Photo: Bill Cotching



# SOUTH AUSTRALIA



Photo credit: Qantas

Where carbonates meet cabernets



# SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Soils chock-a-block with calcium carbonate abound through the southern half of the state.

South Australia's state soil is a

CALCAROSOL



Photo: James Hall



# WESTERN AUSTRALIA



Where sand surrounds pinnacles – and everything else....

# WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Sand, sand everywhere.

Red, yellow, brown, grey, white.

It defines the state.

Western Australia's state soil is  
currently a .....

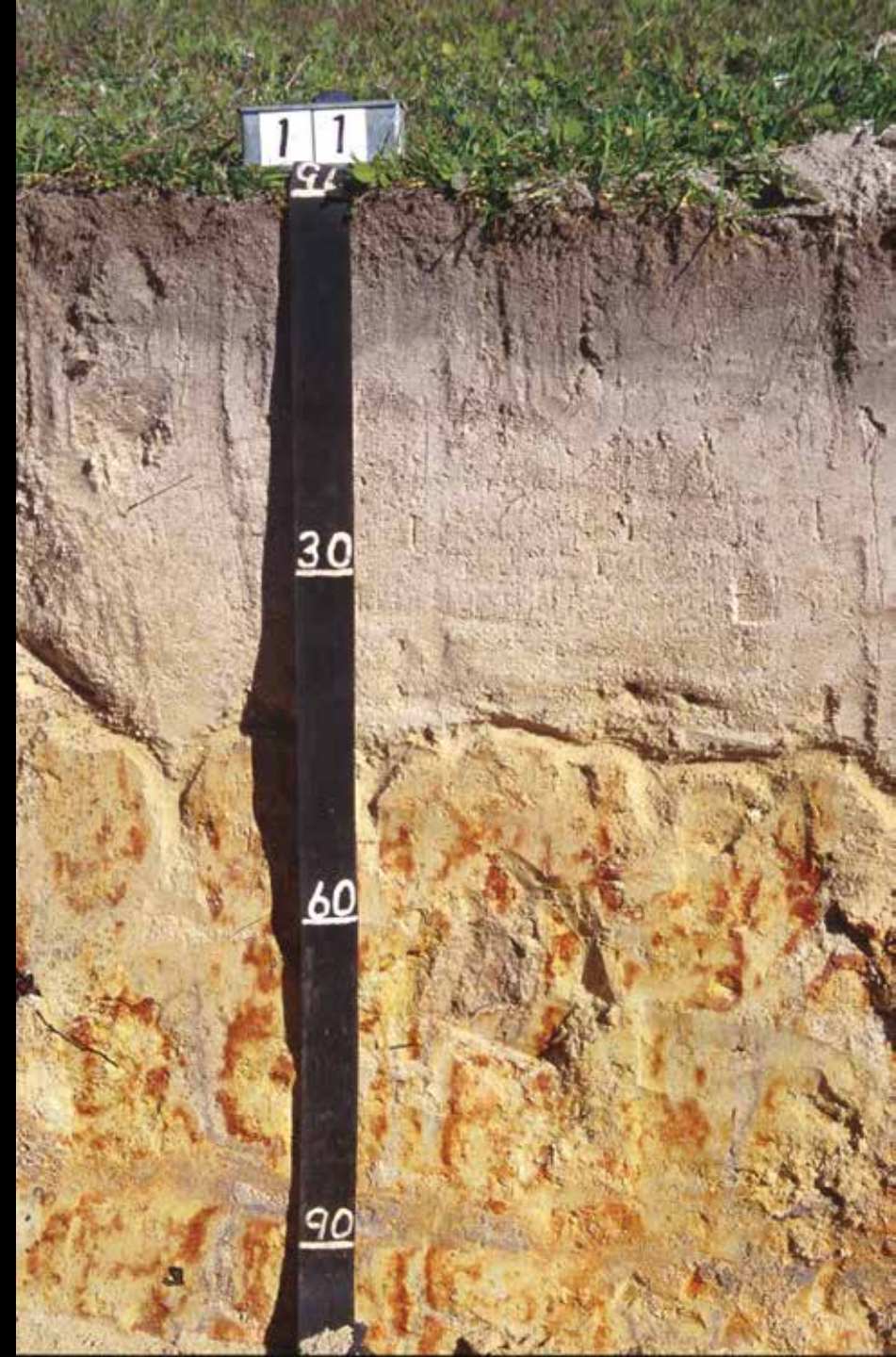


# WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Sand, sand everywhere.  
Red, yellow, brown, grey, white.  
It defines the state.

Western Australia's state soil is  
currently a .....

YELLOW CHROMOSOL!?



What?



# What?

The same Soil Order as New South Wales?

Please let me explain

When the state soils were selected in 1996, the Australian Soil Classification did not have a Soil Order specifically for deep sands.



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Deep sands fell into three Soil Orders  
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that each included much more than sands.

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Deep sands fell into three Soil Orders  
(Podosol, Tenosol & Rudosol)  
that each included much more than sands.

It just didn't work.

So in the absence of a Soil Order for sands the next best was chosen – a texture contrast soil common in parts of the wheatbelt.

## The Yellow Chromosol.

This was always an awkward fit.



The new ASC now has a Soil Order for deep sands

– the Arenosols –

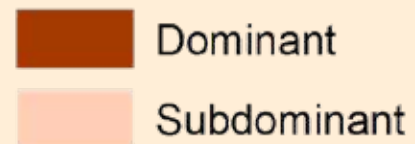
so here's the chance to make the change and formally  
recognize WA for its greatest asset.

# WHY?

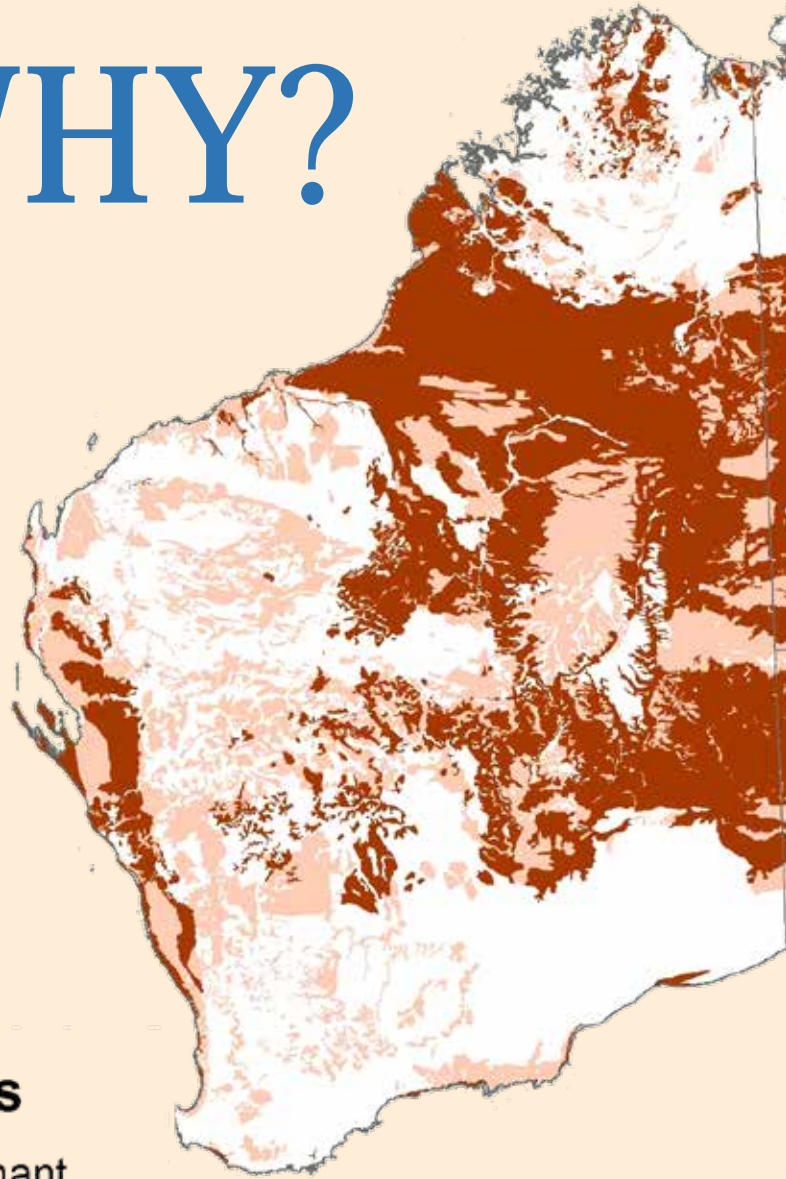
Arenosol is by far the most common Soil Order in Western Australia by area



## Arenosols



# WHY?



## Arenosols



Dominant



Subdominant

Arenosol is by far the most common Soil Order in Western Australia by area

The nickname "sandgroper" is a common colloquial term for Western Australians. The term has been used since at least the 1890s.





Great Sandy Desert WA

# Red ARENOSOL





Dunes, Lancelin WA

# Calsilic ARENOSOL





# Yellow ARENOSOL

Wheatbelt, WA



Photo credit: Farm Weekly

# Bleached ARENOSOL

Swan Coastal Plain, WA





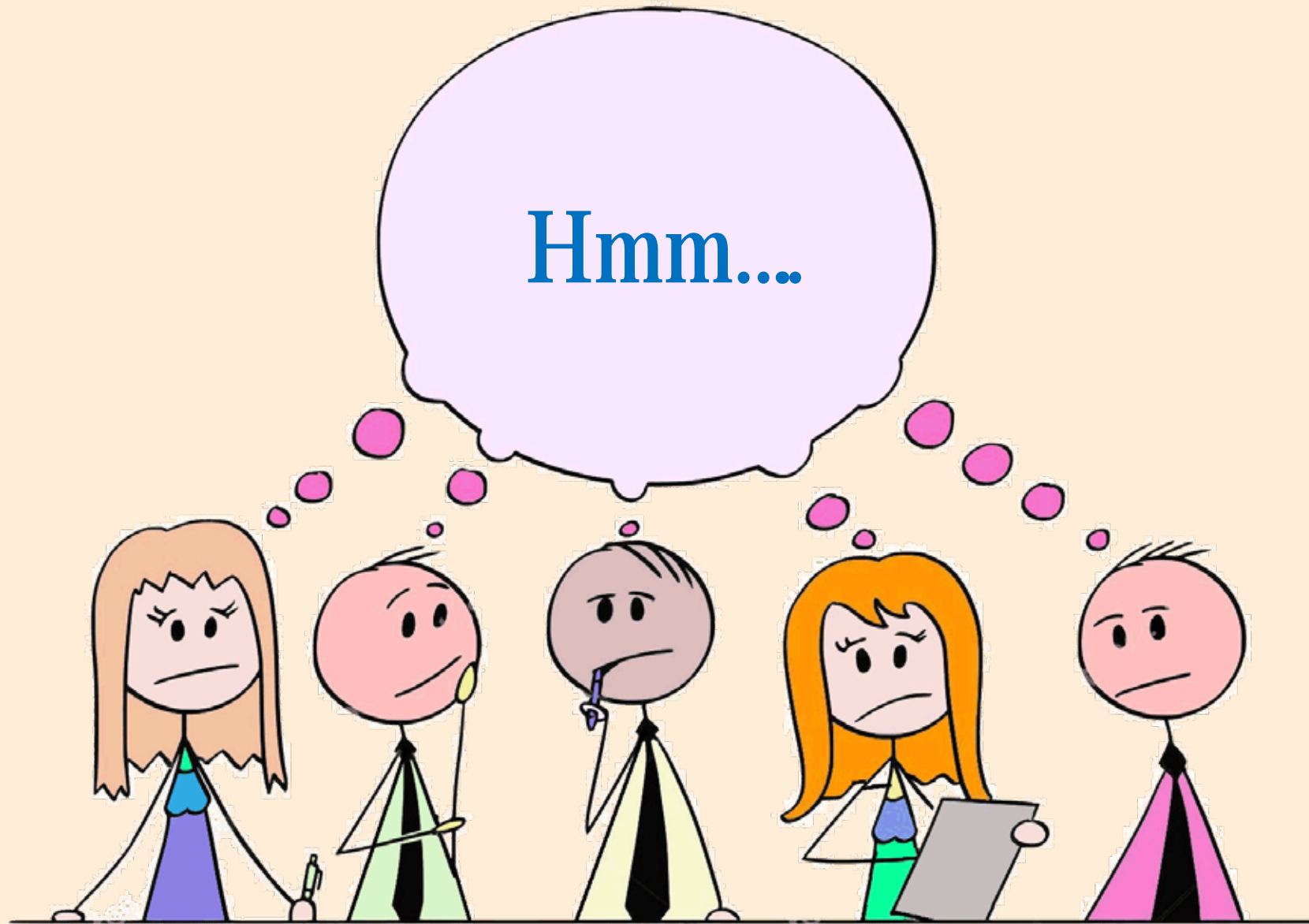


# “Australia’s whitest beach” ARENOSOL



Lucky Bay, Esperance, WA





This got the intellectual might of WA Branch of SSA thinking.....





A change is coming!

I now have the privilege of introducing...



I now have the privilege of introducing...

On this most prestigious of occasions...

I now have the privilege of introducing...

On this most prestigious of occasions...

I know you're all excited!

I now have the privilege of introducing...

On this most prestigious of occasions...

I know you're all excited!

An event you can tell your grandchildren...







**You guessed it.**

**WA's State Soil is now an  
ARENOSOL!**





I'll be in contact with  
the Premier shortly .....



Thank you WA!