An idea sponsored by the Hobart City Council with support from funding under the former ‘Cool Communities’ program has now been launched to parent associations in all schools throughout Australia.

The Walking School Bus concept trialled by the South Hobart Primary School has been taken up by the Australian Greenhouse Office (AGO).

A walking school bus is a group of primary school children who walk to and from school along a safe and enjoyable set route, accompanied by a minimum of two parent driver/supervisors per ‘bus’. One parent ‘drives’ at the front of the bus, while the other parent supervises at the rear. Additional parents may be needed depending on the local requirements. The walking bus picks up ‘passengers’ along the way at designated ‘bus stops’.

The ‘bus stops’ can be meeting points along the route or at homes of the participants. The process is reversed in the afternoon, led by the same or a different adult driver/supervisor. It can be flexible to suit the needs of families using it.

The ‘bus’ can go as seldom or as often as parents want to ‘drive’ it and children want to use it. This means that it can even operate as little as one morning or afternoon each week. Schools are encouraged to start a walking school bus on a one day per week basis and increase its schedule over time. The service is free. Every child is welcome to join the bus even if their parents cannot be drivers.

The AGO has recognised that with more people walking, car-use drops leading to a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and local air pollution.

◊◊ To download a guide to the walking bus go to www.travelsmart.gov.au

‘Walking Bus’ with students, teachers and parents of the South Hobart Primary School.

Footpath Plaques Mark Women’s History

A project funded by the Hobart City Council’s bicentenary program has produced a series of plaques marking sites of historic significance to Tasmanian women. 21 plaques have been installed in footpaths in Hobart’s central business district, Wapping and Hunter Street to form the Women’s History Walk. An initiative of the Tasmanian Women’s Council, the plaques mark a diverse range of sites including the homes and workplaces of prominent women, locations of meetings of early women’s groups and venues in which famous performers made their debuts. The Women’s History Walk provides an opportunity to reflect on the challenges faced and overcome by Tasmanian women, who have played an important role in shaping our history.

World-Class Mountain Bike Track Opened In Glenorchy

A collaboration between Glenorchy City Council, the Sport and Recreation Tasmania’s 2004-05 Facilities and Open Space Development Program and volunteers from the mountain bike community has delivered an international-standard mountain bike track to Glenorchy. The park design caters for all riding abilities, providing beginners through to seasoned riders with challenges to develop their skills. The track features cross-country single tracks, short course downhill links and a dirt jump area. The centre-piece is an international-standard mountain-cross track.
The Kingborough Council and the Director of Public Health have unveiled what is believed to be Australia’s first detailed local plan to respond to a pandemic influenza outbreak. The new plan is based on the conversion of the Kingborough Sports Centre to a special fever clinic for triage and assessment of flu sufferers and referral of those needing treatment to specialised health facilities. The plan will serve as the blueprint for a rollout of detailed plans across all of Tasmania’s local government areas.

The World Health Organisation has warned that a new flu pandemic could be expected within the next 10 years. A key part of the response at a local level is the establishment of special ‘Community Assessment and Information Centres’, or fever clinics, in communities. Clinical staff at these centres will assess those with mild or possible early symptoms of the pandemic illness and these sites will also act as a base where members of the public can get advice. At Kingston, the Sports Centre would serve as a readily identifiable and accessible fever clinic. The indoor cricket centre will be used as an information area for the general public, the basketball courts for triage and assessment of the unwell, and the table tennis building as a holding area prior to moving those needing treatment to a designated facility. Patients would be admitted to the big acute hospitals only if they have severe medical problems.

Key aspects of the overall, statewide plan to combat a major flu epidemic include: dedicated ‘infection hospitals’ that can keep patients isolated to limit flu spread; special, designated holding areas for people presenting at hospital emergency departments with flu symptoms; quarantine measures; school closures; and, voluntary cancellation of public events, or enforceable cancellation if necessary.

Meanwhile, the Australian Government is providing pharmaceutical company CSL Ltd with $4.93 million to fast track production of a pandemic influenza vaccine for Australia. With this funding, CSL will be able to begin clinical trials of a prototype pandemic vaccine for the current H5N1 avian influenza strain in September this year, eight months earlier than currently planned. This will bring forward the completion of the entire development program by 18 months, with a proposed registration date of August 2006. Australia has acquired one of world’s largest stockpiles (on a per capita basis) of antiviral treatments for influenza.

In the 2005-06 Federal Budget, the government provided $23.2 million to establish an independent World Health Organisation Collaborating Centre on influenza.
Huon Valley Council has recently completed a trial program aimed at raising the awareness of young people on the need for daily exercise.

The ‘Fun To Be Fit’ program incorporated the use of the council’s youth outreach van in order to deliver a variety of sport and recreation activities along with health related resource materials. It consisted of four-hour sessions conducted on Saturday afternoons and engaged young people aged 8-16 years from the Geeveston area.

The program facilitators spent a large proportion of their time in unstructured conversation with the participants. Once in dialogue, facilitators were able to tackle issues relevant to the young people including family situations, interpersonal relationships, harm minimisation (in regard to sexual activity and partying), and the long-term effects of drugs, alcohol, and cigarette smoking.

Program facilitators initiated sports activities such as soccer, football, frisbee and volleyball. During periodic rest breaks, the facilitators discussed the many benefits of exercise. In addition to coordinated sports activities, the program offered two separate BBQ lunches that were provided free from charge to the participants and their families. These provided the facilitators with the opportunity to carry on discussions with the community regarding the importance of a healthy and balanced diet.

The program achieved high levels of support in the Geeveston community and the council is planning future ‘Fun To Be Fit’ programs in other centres in the Huon Valley.

◊◊ For more information, contact Jeff Rivendell at the Huon Valley Council on 6264 8400.

PUBLIC IMMUNISATION CLINICS
SECOND THURSDAY EVERY MONTH

Free vaccines available include Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis, Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Hib, Polio, Hepatitis B (infants and grade 6), Influenza (over 65 years of age), Meningococcal (1 – 19 years of age) and Pneumococcal (children born after 1 January 2003 and persons over 65 years of age).

Hepatitis A, Chickenpox and Typhoid vaccines are available at a cost. Hepatitis B, Meningococcal, Pneumococcal and Influenza vaccines are also available at a cost for persons not eligible for free vaccines. Bookings are essential for all costed vaccines.

Morning Clinic: 10.30 - 11.30 am (infants/pre school children)
Afternoon Clinic: 2.00 - 3.30 pm (Adults/school age children)

The immunisation clinics are held in the Elizabeth Street Conference Room, Town Hall (access from parking deck). Please telephone Council on 6238 2715 for more information and to make a booking.

(V.B. Armstrong)
GENERAL MANAGER
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Today’s look in paving is smooth, structured and sophisticated. Score that three out of three for Austral Bricks new Riviera Series clay pavers.

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The Local Government Awards for Excellence are run by the Local Government Association of Tasmania and with the support of local government conference sponsors, Australia Post, Civic Mutual Plus and Telstra Country Wide. The 2005 Local Government Awards for Excellence attracted eighteen entries and a judging team of six short-listed and determined each category and the overall Tasmanian winner.

Governance, Administration, Communication & Customer Service

Lean on Me: A Day in the Life of Total Workforce

Launceston City Council

When the results of a Launceston City Council staff survey showed a proportion of its workforce felt undervalued, the council decided on an innovative response.

‘Lean on Me’ is about communicating the human aspects of the council’s outdoor crew through interpretation. With the aim of disproving the common perception that all council workers do is lean on their shovel, the title was an attempt to embrace the perception and then subvert it.

An exhibition of photographs and narrative, the Lean on Me project brought together normally disconnected elements: council’s outdoor workforce, indoor workers and the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery. The exhibition showed the work of the Total Workforce, 24 hours per day, seven days a week aiming to shift public perception to the thought that it is the community who lean on Total Workforce. The project engaged Total Workforce staff at every point. They not only posed for pictures, they told their stories, and hung the exhibition.

Lean on Me demonstrates the importance of cooperation and open communication in a large organisation and proves what is possible when organisations think laterally and use available resources. It has proven valuable for the people it represents and it is valuable for local government.

For more information, contact Jim Burden, Manager Total Workforce, 6323 3505 or jim.burden@launceston.tas.gov.au.

Continued page 20
Civic
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Civic Celebration 2004
Waratah Wynyard Council

Whilst every Tasmanian council is obliged to prepare an annual report and hold an annual general meeting, Waratah Wynyard Council wanted to do more.

The council wanted more of its community to better understand the work of local government so it decided to create a situation where this could happen. The challenge was to create an event that would meet legal requirements but which would be interesting and entertaining enough to inspire community members to attend.

Subsequently, the council created a civic celebration - a showcase of community groups and a celebration of civic pride. Musical entertainment, performances by cultural groups and the launch of a locally written history provided 160 people with an immensely enjoyable evening.

The Waratah Wynyard civic celebration is much more than the council's annual general meeting. It provides a forum for the council to win the confidence and respect of its community and it is an opportunity to bring the community closer to the council and the council closer to the community.

◊◊ For more information, contact Paul West, General Manager, 6443 8333.

Asset and Environmental Management
West Coast Weed and Fire Management Group
West Coast Council

It is not every day that you can claim credit for finding more and more partners to join with you to address the important issue of weeds, but that is exactly what has occurred on the West Coast.

While the West Coast Weed and Fire Strategy was developed in 2001, the success of its delivery was always going to be dependent on the willingness of a variety of stakeholders to get their hands dirty. Since 2001, the West Coast Council has helped mobilise an army of willing weed workers by hosting the West Coast Weed and Fire Officer.

In turn, this project officer has placed weeds firmly on the agenda of a number of local organisations as well as in the minds of the community.

In partnership with the West Coast Weed and Fire Management Group and through the onground work by the project officer, the West Coast Council is demonstrating leading practice in addressing regional natural resource management problems. So much so, that collaboration between the council, community groups and volunteers is at an all time high.

◊◊ For more information contact Andrew Laird, West Coast Weeds Officer on 6471 4700 or alaird@westcoast.tas.gov.au

Construction of the Supply Mill Bridge
West Tamar Council

When West Tamar Council commenced planning for the replacement of the old timber Supply Mill Bridge, it saw an opportunity to apply leading practice.

The council committed to a process of extensive community consultation and a series of background studies. The design, transportation and construction of the bridge posed considerable logistical challenges. Construction needed to occur outside of the peak tourist season. The project management team need to overcome design challenges for the six 38 metre long, 66 tonne bridge beams.

Moving the beams to the site required vehicle adjustments to create specific manoeuvrability at tight corners. As it was, the truck reversed the last two kilometres to the site. The process of launching the beams required specialist planning and engineering as the beams were too large to be lifted into place by any mobile crane available in Tasmania.

Today, the bridge is an example of a single span structure using the longest prestressed concrete super T beams ever cast in Tasmania and the first haunched super T bridge beams used in Australia. It is a testimony to leading practice in consultation, engineering design, project management and bridge construction.

◊◊ For more information, contact Ray Wright, Technical Services Manager 6323 9300 or ray.wright@wtc.tas.gov.au

Community Development
The Wheel Deal - Youth Transport Hotline
Dorset Council

An opportunity to access funding inspired the Dorset Council to tender for a pilot transport study in its community.

Through consultation, it was the community, in particular transport providers and young people, who ultimately designed 'The Wheel Deal'.

Dorset mayor Peter Partridge pays tribute to Jen Barron and Jenny Sharman, 'The Wheel Deal' project officers.
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SAFE
Deal’. Young people were involved in every aspect of the design and implementation of this initiative, including defining the need, designing the solution, the creation of guidelines and the production of marketing materials.

The Wheel Deal is a brokerage service that sources transport for young people. They call a 1-800 number and leave a message. Messages are checked daily and a council staff member brokers the transport. The young passenger pays a proportion of the cost of travel and The Wheel Deal pays the rest.

Through the mobility offered through The Wheel Deal, young people in the Dorset municipality are more likely to access career, social and recreational opportunities. The project has also brought about a better use of existing transport resources.

The Wheel Deal is unique in Tasmania but it is a model that can be adopted by councils elsewhere. In particular, it could be adapted to suit other groups in the community who may suffer isolation or disadvantage due to limited public transport. In its current form, it is opening doors for young people in Dorset who now have the choice to get where they want to go, when they want to go, at a price they can afford.

◊◊ For more information, contact Jen Barron, Youth Health Officer on 6352 6500 or jbarron@ dorset.tas.gov.au

Real Jobs Program
Derwent Valley Council

The Derwent Valley Council ‘Real Jobs’ program is designed to get young people at risk of becoming welfare dependent, skilled and job ready.

The Beacon Foundation’s ‘Real Jobs’ template is being used to establish a commercial, stone faced wall construction enterprise. Nine young people are being trained in concrete and stone wall construction and are undertaking work for the council. At the end of a 12 month period, the enterprise is cut free of all external support to trade in a commercial environment. By then, the young people have achieved formal qualifications.

A collaboration between a number of government and private sector sponsors has added value to the initial financial contribution by the Derwent Valley Council and projects that are skill heavy, but materials light, are producing high quality, affordable outcomes.

The future is bright for the Derwent Valley Real Jobs participants. There is the potential for a real ongoing job with the council and a firm order for $50,000 worth of stone walls is an encouraging start for a fledgling business.

◊◊ For more information, contact Stephen Mackey, General Manager 6261 8512.

Information Communications Technology
Road Maintenance Management System
Clarence City Council

As a result of Clarence City Council’s new road maintenance management system, council officers can access road maintenance records from their desk computer or laptop.

The Clarence road maintenance management system, a software package, was developed by an in-house team with specialist knowledge. Immediate and accurate answers to road maintenance enquiries are now available in the field or in the office. The system software lists all existing road assets, automatically updates databases as new roads are added to the asset register, automatically updates the asset condition database and automatically generates work orders.

Automation of road maintenance records and the creation of historic road deterioration records enables more efficient planning of road works and encourages resource and budgetary efficiencies. Hours of data entry work have been reduced to minutes and the range of data available has increased and is more accurate.

The Clarence road maintenance management system is an excellent example of utilising technology for increased customer service and operation efficiency.

◊◊ For more information, contact Gary Richardson Manager Communication and Marketing, 6245 8644

in brief...

Local Government Partnership Updates

Waratah-Wynyard Signs
Waratah-Wynyard Council has signed its first Local Government Partnership Agreement with the State Government making it the 23rd such bilateral agreement. Initiatives such as identifying and marketing economic development opportunities, tourism developments, Bass Highway planning improvements and Crown Land rationalisation are covered in the agreement. Other issues addressed by the agreement include: weed management; the development of a positive ageing plan for the Waratah-Wynyard municipal area; enhanced emergency management; building effective links between schools and the parents of all pre-school age children to support early years learning and the transition to school; and, development of the concept of an artist-in-residence program based in Waratah.

Launceston City Council Continues

A new Partnership Agreement between the State Government and the Launceston City Council will see Inveresk completed as a major state icon and Aurora Stadium consolidated as the Tasmanian home of AFL football. The Agreement includes a number of economic development opportunities, including redeveloping the old Launceston General Hospital site, developing the Cataract Gorge reserve as a major tourist attraction and developing a master plan for council-owned land at Russell Plains, in Rocherlea, which has the potential to house large industrial developments. The agreement will address improving Launceston’s air quality, transport and freight issues in and around the city and the promotion of Launceston’s educational institutions to international students.
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- Civil Construction BCG98

- Extractive Industries MNQ98
- Local Government LG10
- Manufactured Mineral Products PMC99
- Road Transport & Distribution TDT97

Works Infrastructure Pty Ltd, a wholly owned subsidiary of Downer EDI, now owns INFRATRAIN, which was formerly a division of Civil Construction Corporation. Downer EDI operates throughout Australia, South East Asia and New Zealand with over 13,000 employees. This provides INFRATRAIN with enormous support and resources ensuring flawless delivery of our services and up to date technical expertise.

We offer a “one stop shop” service to our clients providing training services that address the needs of council employees across all areas. This includes, road crews, parks and gardens, environmental, business services, management and other areas of need. Our success is based on relationship building that provides training outcomes, which are relevant and contribute to your business goals. This approach improves the credibility and value of the program.

Our trainers have extensive industry experience enabling them to relate to your employees. They will work together with you and use actual jobs as part of the training and assessment process. Where necessary formal classroom training will be provided.

INFRATRAIN offers a wide range of training programs which include:

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- Laser Safety Officer
- First Aid
- Numerous Plant tickets
- Spotters
- Risk and Hazard Assessments on plant and equipment
- Auditing for compliance against Council standards
- Traffic management
- Advanced traffic management
- Certificate IV being developed for Managers, Supervisors, Foremen and
- Customised development of any other training needs you have.
- Skills Audits

We at INFRATRAIN look forward to working in partnership with you to achieve quality outcomes, which contribute to developing a culture of learning and development within your organization.

If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact us on 1300885300.

We look forward to meeting with you to discuss your training needs.