Carbon Pollution Reduction Program Launch Speech

Mayor Mike Gaffney, President Local Government Association of Tasmania

Today is a significant day for Tasmania Local Government.

In December 2008 the Local Government Association entered into a Partnership Agreement with the Tasmanian State Government to address the impacts of climate change through a cooperative and coordinated approach.

Four key areas for action were agreed:

1. The establishment of a Future Planning and Action Committee,
2. The implementation of a Carbon Pollution Reduction Program across the whole of local Government,
3. Undertaking community consultation and education; and
4. Communicating knowledge and information relating to planning responses for climate change.

This conference is addressing all of these key areas. The information and ideas shared here today and tomorrow will provide the context and action for the Future Planning and Action Committee. The conference has and will continue to provide capacity building, education and communicate knowledge and information to delegates that can then be transferred into actions at the local council level in developing planning responses for climate change.

However, at this moment we are here to acknowledge Tasmanian Local Government as a national leader and to launch the Tasmanian Local Government Carbon Pollution Reduction Program.

The Program has been jointly funded by the Local Government Association of Tasmanian and the State Government and is part of the implementation of the Statewide Partnership Agreement on Climate Change.
This is a significant achievement for Tasmanian Local Government given the demographics of Tasmanian Councils and the often challenging financial and human resource constraints experienced by a number of councils.

The program will result in Tasmania being the first State/Territory in Australia to have all councils undertaking monitoring benchmarking and reporting of greenhouse gas emissions.

Planet Footprint, will deliver the program to councils and will be working with the Local Government Association of Tasmania to implement energy and greenhouse scorekeeping services into the Tasmanian local government sector over the next few months. This will form the foundation of the carbon emissions reduction program by assisting councils understand how exactly they are performing in relation to energy and greenhouse gas emissions.

LGAT is very pleased to be associated with Planet Footprint. Since its inception in 2005, Planet Footprint has established itself as a leader in Australia providing independent environmental reporting and benchmarking. It was Planet Footprint’s strength in servicing the local government market together with its practical approach to monitoring energy and greenhouse performance of councils that attracted us to them.

Planet Footprint will be applying its own scorekeeping program to Tasmanian Councils, giving us the ability for the first time to see what is happening statewide in regards to local government greenhouse performance.

Planet Footprint assures us that this measurement and benchmarking can be done with minimal impact on individual council resources. In short, we will be able to see where we have come from in regards to energy and greenhouse performance, where we are currently at, and where we are going. . . Statewide . . . with a minimum of fuss.

I welcome Planet Footprint to Tasmanian and the Carbon Emissions Reduction Program and look forward to seeing their first round of reports as they are generated over the coming months.

I would like to welcome Andrew Wales, Managing Director of Planet Footprint.