President’s Message

Earlier this week LGAT CEO, Allan Garcia, sent to all councils and mayors an email outlining the current status of the councils’ agreement to move to a single water and sewerage corporation, an agreement of course subject to consensus being reached with the State Government on a number of governance issues. The information included a Draft Role Statement for Owner’s Representatives together with a draft project plan and timetable.

Having recently met with the Premier and Local Government Minister to discuss the position reached by councils, I was encouraged by the Premier indicating that she was keen to work with us to achieve a single corporation as soon as possible. No formal response has yet been received from the Premier but as soon as it is, you will be advised.

There is obviously much work to be done and at present I am in the process of establishing an Implementation Steering Committee that I propose will include three members of the General Management Committee, the current Chair of the Owner’s Representatives and Miles Hampton, current Chair of the Corporations. This group will be supported by Association staff and the Corporations, and I should be in a position to advise the membership of that committee early next week.

With the Government keen to have legislation prepared and through the Parliament by the end of this year, it has been made clear that adequate time for consultation with councils is of the utmost importance. I therefore encourage all elected members to play an active role in the consultations and to provide feedback so as to ensure the new corporation is structured as we would like it to be.

I was interested to read recently of the actions taken by the Sorell Council as part of their Local Government reform agenda and I commend Mayor Carmel Torenius and Council for being proactive in this matter. The responses they received as a result of the ratepayer survey will certainly provide a great deal of information that will be useful as the Local Government reform conversations continue.

You may also be aware from newspaper reports that the councils in the northern region have initiated a project through Northern Tasmania Development (NTD) to broaden the current debate around Local Government reform and to canvass alternative review options. I believe that the final details of this project will be established after a more considered debate is undertaken, a debate that will be informed by research. Local Government reform is certainly “spreading” and I am looking forward to the panel discussion on this subject at next week’s conference. I hope to see many of you there!

High Court Decision Bolsters Case for Constitutional Recognition

Prof George Williams, an expert in constitutional law has advised that the long-awaited decision by the High Court regarding the Williams Case bolsters Local Government’s case for constitutional change. At the National General Assembly of Local Government, Local Government Minister Simon Crean stated that he was prepared to take the case for financial recognition of Local Government in the Australian Constitution to a referendum at the next election if it was confident that it would be supported by voters. The Minister also said that the Government would need to consider the outcome of the Williams Case, which centres on the Commonwealth’s ability to fund a chaplaincy program in public schools.

ALGA President, Clr Genia McCaffery, said securing constitutional recognition for Local Government would ensure federal funding remained available to provide essential local community infrastructure and services. The Government has until October to decide whether it will hold a referendum on constitutional recognition of Local Government. Prof George Williams will be addressing delegates at next week’s Local Government Conference.

LGAT has Moved!

LGAT management and staff have relocated to
326 Macquarie Street, Hobart.
Ph (03) 6233 5966
Parking for visitors is available in Gore Street
New Event Ideas Grant
The Events Tasmania Grant Program 2013 is now open, offering grants for New Event Ideas (up to $10,000). New Event Ideas projects must have the potential to deliver substantial benefits to the region where they are held, and to the communities involved as workers, volunteers, participants and audiences. Successful applicants will be delivering an exceptional event project which evolves the operations of an existing event, supports a number of events run by the same organisation, or establishes a new and innovative event product to be delivered in Tasmania. Events can apply for up to $10,000. The Events Tasmania Grant Program 2013 closes on 6 August. To apply, visit www.eventstasmania.com/grants/new_event_ideas.

2012 Medibank Active Tasmania Awards
The 2012 Medibank Active Tasmania Awards, coordinated by the Premier’s Physical Activity Council, are open, with $31,000 in prize money available across five major categories. Councils, schools and community organisations are invited to nominate their physical activity initiatives in this year’s awards program. Nominations close 17 August. For more information, phone 1800 252 476, email ppac@getmoving.tas.gov.au, or visit www.getmoving.tas.gov.au.

Have Your Say on new UTAS Course
UTAS with DHHS Population Health and others is developing a Masters of Public Health degree course. UTAS already offers a graduate certificate in Public Health and is now gauging interest and demand for progressing the course to a Diploma and Masters in Public Health. Those interested are invited to complete a quick online survey at www.surveymonkey.com/s/FX6NYS6 to help develop the new program. For more information, contact Stella Stevens at stevens@utas.edu.au.

Speed Reading Workshop
If you have a mountain of information to read and no time to do it, then doubling your reading speed and improving your comprehension would be a huge benefit to you. A Speed Reading workshop will be held in Hobart on 10 July. To find out more, go to www.ttc.tas.gov.au, or phone 6232 7511.

National Disability Awards
In the lead up to the International Day of People with Disability, the Australian Government hosts the National Disability Awards to celebrate the achievements of people with disability and recognise individuals and organisations that have improved the lives of people with a disability. Nominations are invited for the 2012 awards. Categories include Excellence in: Disability Reform, Emerging Leaders, Accessible Communities, Improving Social Participation, Employment Opportunities, and Improving Personal and Community Support. Nominations close on 20 July. For more information, please go to www.idpwd.com.au.

Free Information Sessions
Primary Employers Tasmania together with WorkSafe Tasmania are running free, 2-hour information sessions across Tasmania during July and August for the rural industry on the new work health and safety laws. In these sessions you will learn: the key aspects of the new laws; how the new laws will affect you; how you can prepare; and contractor management. The information sessions will be held in Hobart (12 July), Smithton and Devonport (16 July), Scottsdale and Launceston (7 August), Campbell Town (14 August), Bothwell (24 August) and Richmond (31 August). Register online at www.worksafe.tas.gov.au.

Email Ninja
Feel like your emails are out of control? This practical workshop will shift the way you work by helping you to understand, process, organise and prioritise your inbox. The road tested email practices that you will learn at this workshop can be applied as soon as you return to the workplace ... to help you get your inbox to zero every day! The workshop will be held in Hobart, on 10 August. For further details, visit www.ttc.tas.gov.au, or phone 6232 7511.

100 Women of Influence Awards
The Australian Financial Review and The Westpac Group recently launched the 100 Women of Influence Awards to support and promote diversity in Australia. Nominations are invited for Australian women who are making an important contribution to reshaping Australia’s social and economic life, across business - small or large, the community and arts, philanthropy, the public sector and not-for-profits. The organisations are looking locally, regionally, nationally and internationally for Australian women who are having an impact well beyond their formal roles; who are using their interests and influence to improve the world for others. Entries submitted by an entrant close on 10 August. If you are nominating someone else, entries close on 27 July. For more information and to nominate, visit https://subscribe.afr.com/afr/offers/womenofinfluence/default.aspx?AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1

Upcoming Events
AGM / General Meeting, Hobart 11 July
100th Local Government Conference, Hobart 12-13 July

Local Government Association of Tasmania
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