President’s Message
The 100th Annual Conference of the Local Government Association must be described as a great success and I thank all those responsible for putting it together, Stephanie Watson and all of the Association staff. I have said on a number of occasions that we have a great team and I am sure you would have observed that during the conference.

At a time when things are pretty tough in the corporate world, it was pleasing to see such a large number of trade exhibitors joining us this year, some of them for the first time. I am confident that conference delegates, like me, found all the people at the trade booths were very appreciative of the opportunity join with Local Government at this year’s conference.

With the broad range of speakers and workshop sessions, it is fair to say that delegates were provided with much food for thought in line with the conference theme - Treasuring the Past, Transforming the Future. Local Government Minister Bryan Green addressed the conference and informed us of some changes that the Government intended to make to the Local Government Act; giving councils an opportunity to opt in for compulsory voting (the conference having voted down the idea a couple of days before), and “all in, all out” elections with four-year terms. Mayors will continue to be popularly elected but Deputy Mayors will be elected around the council table.

We do need to seriously consider the part of the conference theme which refers to Transforming the Future. Keynote speaker Michael McQueen spoke about Winning the Battle for Relevance, Professor Brian Dollery raised the question Is Amalgamation the Silver Bullet in Local Government?, and the panel members explored The Road to Local Government Reform – Where is it headed?

I believe there is a clear message for Local Government, leaving little doubt that for the sector to remain relevant, we need to embrace change. Change is inevitable; it is therefore in our best interests to see that the changes are made by us, and not for us!

On a lighter note, I must congratulate Allan Garcia on his presentation at the conference entitled That was the season that was, a light-hearted and sometimes serious look at the past year through the eyes of the footy coach! Well done Allan, perhaps this could be a regular addition to future conferences!

Three Tasmanian Councils Recognised at the 2012 Local Government Awards

Burnie City, Central Highlands and Meander Valley Councils each received a award at the 2012 Local Government Awards for Excellence. The awards were announced at 100th Local Government Conference, held in Hobart on 13 July, and were presented by Local Government Minister, Hon Bryan Green.

Burnie City Council won the Delivering Excellence in Natural and Built Environments award for the Burnie Waterfront Rejuvenation, a seven-year project that has transformed the waterfront to provide the city with a valuable piece of community infrastructure that is attractive to visitors and locals alike.

Central Highlands Council’s Economic Development Action Plan won the Achieving Excellence through Innovation category. Through the plan, Council identified short, medium and long-term programs to make the Central Highlands a more attractive place to live, work, visit, invest and access. Importantly, Council has engaged with community, business and tourism representatives on the plan’s implementation.

The Delivering Excellence for our Communities category was presented to Meander Valley Council for its STUDIO BE innovation, a community arts resource for sound, video, photographic and multimedia production. Full details will be provided in the September edition of the LGAT News magazine.

Spatial@gov 2012 Conference
The Spatial@gov 2012 Conference, themed Future Directions: Linking People, Policy and Place, will be held in Canberra from 20-22 November. Spatial@gov is not just for spatial people but also for those from areas such as policy development, government service delivery, emergency management and Local Government. It’s about understanding how to realise the benefits of spatially enabling information and developing spatial capabilities to support a whole range of government activities. For more information, go to www.cebit.com.au/spatial.
Clr Foster Recognised for Valuable Work in Brighton
Brighton Mayor, Clr Tony Foster, has received the second Life Members Award for Meritorious Service, jointly coordinated by the Local Government Association of Tasmania and Life Members of the Association. The award was presented by Life Member, Sue Smith, in Hobart on 11 July. An active participant in Local Government in Tasmania for 25 years, Clr Foster is now serving his 20th year as the Mayor of Brighton. Clr Foster's many achievements include Council involvement in the development of the Brighton Bypass and the Brighton Transport Hub, and chairing a taskforce which resulted in the creation of the Jordan River Learning Federation following the fire which destroyed Bridgewater High School in 2007. Under his leadership, Brighton continues to grow, facilities for residents have been enhanced, and Brighton Council has developed strategic agreements for resource-sharing with six Tasmanian municipalities. Brighton is now home to a $2.8 million Civic Centre, improvements have been made to the Bridgewater shopping precinct, and streets and parks have been landscaped. Clr Foster was also active in accommodating 500 Kosovars fleeing a war in Europe in 1999 and, 11 years later, embraced Canberra’s decision to house boat refugees at Pontville.

Law Enforcement and Public Health Conference (LEPH2012)
Law enforcement, especially through the activities of police forces, has a crucial but largely unacknowledged role in the protection and promotion of public health. Public health is also an active partner in crime prevention. Often Local Government provides the community leadership that integrates police and health strategies to address issues like community safety, public health, urban planning and space management. The inaugural Law Enforcement and Public Health Conference (LEPH2012), to be held in Melbourne from 11-14 November, will explore the intersection between law enforcement and public health. The organisers are looking for people from the Local Government, public health and police sectors to present their joint projects as part of the conference’s Marketplace of Ideas, and encourage innovative and original approaches to sharing experiences with other delegates. For further details, go to www.policing-and-public-health.com/program/. For a copy of the draft program, visit www.policing-and-public-health.com.

The Tasmanian Honour Roll of Women
The Tasmanian Government is calling for nominations to the 2013 Tasmanian Honour Roll of Women. Organisations and individuals are invited to nominate suitable women from all backgrounds and cultures, and all fields of endeavour including community service, humanitarian, business, science and technology, arts and entertainment, sport, education and environment. Posthumous nominations are accepted. Nominations close on 28 September. To nominate an individual or a women’s organisation, please visit www.dpac.tas.gov.au/divisions/cdd/programs_and_services/tasmanian_honour_roll_of_women.

Stand Up, Speak Up and Persuade
Learn how to be an effective speaker by influencing your audience and motivate them to take action. This one-day workshop is suitable for anyone who wishes to improve their communication skills, who presents to an audience, or who wishes to motivate others. Stand Up, Speak Up and Persuade will be held on 14 August in Hobart. Visit www.ttc.tas.gov.au, or phone 6232 7511 to find out more.

Home Energy Saver Scheme
$29.9 million is available over four years (until 2014-15) to support low-income households across Australia experiencing difficulty meeting and paying for their energy needs. The Home Energy Saver Scheme, administered by the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, will provide access to energy efficiency and financial management information and education, advice, advocacy, support, referral to the No Interest Loans Scheme if appropriate and integrated service coordination around energy efficiency and financial management. More information is available at www.fahcsia.gov.au/our-responsibilities/communities-and-vulnerable-people/programs-services/financial-management-program.

Upcoming Events
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