President’s Message

Today we have the first meeting of the Water and Sewerage Steering Committee and to refresh everyone’s memory, the members of that committee are Mayor Jan Bond, Mayor Barry Jarvis, Mayor Graham Bury, Mayor Tony Foster, Miles Hampton (the current Chair of the Corporations) and myself, with support provided by Allan Garcia and Melanie Brown of the Local Government Association.

The Premier has responded to the Association’s advice of the outcome of the Special Meeting of the Association held on 5 June, where agreement was reached to move to a single authority, with certain conditions and a preferred governance model. The Premier has advised that, “The detailed questions raised concerning the governance arrangements for the new corporation will be specifically dealt with during the drafting of the legislation, with appropriate consultation to occur with Local Government. Notwithstanding this, I can assure owner councils that, as a preliminary position, the Government does not have any significant concerns with the governance arrangements as proposed in the recommendations of the Special Meeting”.

The Premier has further advised that, “In relation to the additional matters raised, the Government does not support the request for a referendum provision relating to the privatisation of the Corporation to be included in the legislation.”

The Government is very keen, in order to limit the period of uncertainty for the corporations and their employees, to see this important reform to progress quickly and expects the legislation to be ready for tabling in the 2012 Spring Session of Parliament.

The Premier has advised that the Government will meet the direct costs of legislative drafting and the provision of departmental support by Treasury and will waive Stamp Duty associated with the transfer of existing water and sewerage assets. “As was the case when the water and sewerage corporations were established, the proposed legislation will include a provision specifically excluding the payment of State Tax in respect of any document prepared to give effect to a transfer order.”

One might say that we are on the way; much to do and a relatively tight time line! The input and support from councils in the coming weeks and months is essential to enable this important reform to come to fruition. One day, water and sewerage may well be removed from our “active” agenda!

In closing, and on a very sad note, we remember the untimely death of Huon Valley Deputy Mayor, Gary Doyle on 2 August. Our thoughts and prayers are with Gary’s family and friends and we give thanks for the service he gave to his local communities in the Huon Valley.

Saluting their Service Commemorations Grants Program

The Saluting Their Service commemorations grants program supports projects and activities which directly commemorate Australia’s servicemen and women who served in wars, conflicts and peace operations. The program is designed to preserve our wartime heritage and to involve people throughout the nation in a wide range of activities and projects. Modest grants of up to $4,000 are available for projects which meet the aims and objectives of the grants program. Councils, schools, museums, community and ex-service organisations are invited to apply. For details, visit http://factsheets.dva.gov.au/factsheets/documents/GS14%20Saluting%20Their%20Service%20Commemorations%20Grants%20Program.pdf.

Vale Clr Gary Doyle

Huon Valley Council Deputy Mayor, Clr Gary Doyle, passed away suddenly on 2 August, aged 57. Having served as a Councillor for ten years, Clr Doyle was elected to the position of Deputy Mayor in November 2011 and held portfolio responsibilities for the Council’s Aged Care and Housing and Development Services Programs. Clr Doyle was a well respected and passionate advocate of the Huon Valley, particularly the Dover and Southport communities. He worked closely with the community to re-establish the Dover Sports Centre, and make further improvements to the Dover foreshore. He played a pivotal role in the establishment and construction of the Dover Skate Park and was instrumental in Clean Up Dover and the Dover 150 years celebration. Our sincere condolences to Clr Doyle’s family, colleagues and friends at this sad time.
Infrastructure Financial Management Workshop
Finance professionals, asset managers, engineers and technical staff are invited to attend an Infrastructure Financial Management Workshop focusing on the importance of asset management and how it relates to long-term financial planning. Gain a better understanding of: accounting for infrastructure; depreciation, valuation, useful life, fair value; managing financial sustainability; integrating asset management planning and long-term financial planning; and meeting national frameworks for financial reporting. The workshop will be held in Hobart from 28-29 August and in Launceston from 4-5 September. For further information, visit www.ipwea.org.au/ifm2012.

New Industry Code for Mobile Phone Base Stations
A new industry code for mobile phone base station deployment came into effect on 1 July. The new Communications Alliance Industry Code 564:2011 Mobile Base Station Deployment is registered as a mandatory code by the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA). The Code stipulates processes for mobile network operators to follow to inform the community and other stakeholders about facilities that are deemed “Low Impact” (exempt from DAs). In a key enhancement, residents will now be able to log on to a new website page at www.rfnsa.com.au and access information about the proposed deployment, including technical details, location (including a dynamic map), and proposed consultation activities such as community information session details and contact details. For details, visit www.commsalliance.com.au/mobile-phone-tower-information.

2012 Award for Innovation in Local Government
Nominations are invited for the LGMA Tasmania Awards for Excellence and the inaugural Award for Innovation. The Awards for Excellence seek to recognise leadership and excellence in Local Government professionals. There are two categories for this Award – the Open Category and Aspiring Manager Category. The Award for Innovation aims to showcase the talent and advance the careers of those working innovatively in Local Government by highlighting outstanding achievements and innovative practices. Entries close on 24 August. Further information is available from the LGMA Website at http://tas.lgma.org.au, or email Pam Crawford at pamela.crawford@lgmatas.org.au.

National Stroke Week
In Australia, 1 in 6 people will suffer a stroke during their lifetime. Many strokes are preventable. From 10-16 September, it’s National Stroke Week. Councils are encouraged to get involved by helping to raise awareness among staff and community members about the signs of stroke and the associated risk factors. The National Stroke Foundation is urging all Australians to reduce the risk of stroke by: knowing your personal risk factors; being physically active; enjoying a healthy diet; limiting alcohol consumption; avoiding cigarette smoke; and learning to recognise the warning signs of stroke and act FAST. To participate, visit www.strokefoundation.com.au, or call 1800 787 653.

Employer of Choice Awards
Are you an Employer of Choice? The Employer of Choice Awards recognise and promote Tasmanian organisations that, regardless of their size, successfully attract and retain skilled employees. An Employer of Choice is a workplace with a reputation among its staff as a great place to work. Tasmanian Employers of Choice say being officially recognised gives them the edge in the competition for skilled labour. Entries close on 7 September. For details, visit www.development.tas.gov.au/economic/advice_and_services/programs_and_services/workforce_development/employer_of_choice/employer_of_choice_awards.

2013 Tasmanian Leaders Program
Applications for the 2013 Tasmanian Leaders Program are now open and encouraged from across Tasmania from within business, not-for-profits and the public sector. The program sees participants meet at regular intervals to explore critical issues facing Tasmania through seminars, panels, field trips, case studies and retreats which expose participants to over 200 business and community leaders, experts and critical thinkers. The result is a unique life-changing experience that achieves positive outcomes for participants, their employers and Tasmania. For more information, to download an application form, or to register for our information sessions in Burnie and Devonport on 3 September, Launceston on 4 September and Hobart on 6 September, please visit the Tasmanian Leaders website at www.taslianleaders.org.au, or phone Angela Driver on 0417 379 703.

Position Vacant - Manager Pakana Services
Are you passionate about making a difference? Want to be part of an innovative start-up social enterprise? Would you like to use your managerial and trade skills, and work outdoors? Pakana Services (Green Team) is advertising for a Manager to start up and manage a new social enterprise. An advertisement will appear in The Mercury on Saturday, 18 August. An application package will be available from www.nmsouth.org.au from tomorrow. Applications close on 10 September.

Upcoming Events
- General Managers’ Workshop, Riverside: 12-13 September
- GMC Meeting, Brighton: 26 September
- GMC Meeting, Brighton: 26 September
- LGMA Conference, Bridport: 3-5 October