President’s Message

I am becoming increasingly concerned with the more regular displays of the NIMBY syndrome that we are witnessing in a number of areas. At this time, I am particularly disturbed by the fear and orchestrated campaign that is being generated around the permit that has been granted for the construction and operation of a hazardous waste storage cell proposed for the Copping Waste Facility.

Tasmania has for many years been in desperate need of such a facility to safely handle hazardous waste, waste that is currently being stored in the backyards of businesses and industry. Having a site capable of being accessed by everyone in the State who has hazardous waste in need of disposal is certainly a positive step forward. The Board of Southern Waste Solutions is to be congratulated for taking this initial and important step. The proposed cell is to be constructed within the footprint of the existing landfill facility that has been in operation for around ten years and maintained in a very professional manner, I believe without incident.

The process required to achieve a permit for such a development is not a simple exercise, but an extensive one. Quite rightly, the process was strictly adhered to and the fact that some ‘now concerned ratepayers’ missed their opportunity to make a representation is certainly not the fault of anyone but themselves. I compliment Southern Waste Solutions for agreeing to consult for the remainder of this month with a commitment to take account of concerns currently being raised by the ‘opponents’ and, where necessary, to accommodate additional conditions to their permit should the EPA consider such is warranted. My experience in matters such as this is that no matter how much latitude is given by the proponent, some people are never satisfied. I sincerely hope that this will not be the position with this development.

From my personal observations, the orchestrated campaign being promoted by a small, noisy group fighting to stop the construction of the hazardous waste cell at Copping is certainly being assisted by talk-back radio programs. I am quickly coming to the conclusion that such programs seem to be extremely upbeat promoting negative community attitudes on a range of issues.

It is extraordinarily easy to adopt a negative attitude. I know because I need to continually remind myself when considering issues that are brought to my attention for resolution. Looking for the positive in a suggestion, or a particular project takes much more effort and serious consideration. It is just so easy to say “no” and be negative. We all need to strive for a ‘can do’ and positive approach to issues. Local Government needs it, as do, dare I suggest, both our State and Federal Governments! Without a positive attitude and a ‘can do’ mentality, nothing can be achieved.

ALGA Announces New President

The Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) has appointed Mayor of Marion in SA, Felicity-ann Lewis, as President following the retirement of Genia McCaffery. After 17 years in Local Government and having served four terms as North Sydney Mayor, Genia McCaffery decided not to run again for the mayoral position and has stepped down as ALGA President. As ALGA President, Mayor Lewis will take the lead in negotiating ALGA’s case for constitutional change. Mayor Lewis has served as ALGA Vice President since 2010 and has been a member of the ALGA Board since 2009. Mayor Lewis will fill the role of President until it votes on the presidency at its Annual General Meeting in November.

Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Program Funding

The Federal Government has announced additional funding for the Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Program (HVSPP), with $40 million available in 2012-13 and 2013-14. The program funds projects aimed at improving safety and productivity for the heavy vehicle industry and other road users, such as technology trials addressing speed and fatigue; construction of rest stops and parking on highways; and upgrades to freight routes. The categories of projects eligible for funding include: rest area projects; parking/decoupling bay projects; road network enhancement projects; technology trial projects; demonstration projects; and livestock transport industry projects. Submissions are being sought by 30 September from key industry stakeholders and Local Government identifying priority projects. For details, visit www.nationbuildingprogram.gov.au/funding/Heavyvehicles/Index.aspx.
**$100,000 Community Funding Program to give Boost to Local Communities**

The Neighbourhood Watch Australasia (NHWA) Community Funding Program is open for applications. The $100,000 is being targeted to give a much needed boost and revitalisation to local community Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) groups. The funding for this year is focused on reinvigorating existing groups and establishing new ones throughout Tasmania and the program allows for new or existing NHW groups to be working alongside Police or Local Government authorities to problem solve local community safety and crime prevention issues. Grants of no more than $3,000 each are available. Applications close on 28 September. For application details, visit www.nhwa.com.au.

**GrantsLINK Website Helping Tasmanian Councils Making the Most of Federal Funds**

Two councils in regional Tasmania are pushing ahead with new local infrastructure projects in partnership with the Australian Government. Round Two of the Regional Development Australia Fund is investing $1.7 million in the State, enabling construction of the projects – worth $20 million – to go ahead. Sorell Council will build a sporting, recreation and cultural precinct for the south east region of Tasmania, while Central Coast Council will upgrade the Penguin Regional Athletics Centre. Both projects have succeeded by being able to leverage funding from different levels of government. Information about more than 300 grants programs from around Australia is available on the GrantsLINK website at www.grants.myregion.gov.au. Grants can range from carbon farming, health services and community infrastructure through to assistance for youth and community organisations. For other information about your region, visit www.myregion.gov.au.

**Local Government: Driving the Future**

What will Local Government in Tasmania look like in the future? What effect will potential amalgamations and resource sharing have on Local Government? How will demographic changes affect local communities, and what implications will these changes have for infrastructure planning and service delivery? These are just some of the issues that will be explored at the 2012 LGMA Tasmania Annual Conference to be held at Bridport, from 3-5 October. Further information is available at http://tas.lgma.org.au, or email pamela.crawford@lgmatas.org.au.

**Connectedness to Nature and the Psychological Health Impacts of Climate Change Study**

A new study investigating the relationship between a person’s connectedness to nature and the psychological health impacts of climate change in rural Tasmania has been launched. The study will develop community-based programs to support communities in managing and responding to community anxiety about climate change. Three Tasmanian regions have been selected: North East; North West and West Coast; and the Upper Derwent Valley and Central Plateau. If you reside in one of these areas and would like to participate, visit www.surveymonkey.com/s/PsychHealthClim, or email Christine.Materia@utas.edu.au.

**Environmental Health Australia State Conference**

Environmental Health Australia (Tas) will be conducting its annual state conference in Kingston from 3-5 October. The conference theme, Environmental Health: Making A Difference, will bring together practitioners from a variety of environmental health and Local Government disciplines to share experiences and to identify and explore how to make a positive difference in improving the health standards of our communities. The presenters will be addressing issues such as food security, social determinants of health, wood smoke, food safety and more. Go to www.eh.org.au for further details, or email Mark Dwyer at dwyerm@hobartcity.com.au.

**Anti-Poverty Week**

Councils are encouraged to participate in Anti-Poverty Week, from 14-20 October, to recognise the great work being done to reduce poverty and hardship. During Anti-Poverty Week, councils can help to fight poverty and hardship by: strengthening public understanding of poverty and hardship around the world and Australia; encouraging research, discussion and action to address these problems, including action by individuals, organisations and governments; and inspiring commitment to make a difference. For more information about Anti-Poverty Week and to find out how to get involved, visit www.antipovertyweek.org.au.

**National Local Government Corporate Services Conference**

From 10-11 October, the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) will host the National Local Government Corporate Services Conference, focusing on best practice corporate services delivery across Local Government key service areas. The conference will cover topics including human resources, customer service, professional development, marketing and communications, financial management, procurement, economics and digital strategy. Register now! For further information, phone (03) 9667 5555.

**Upcoming Events**

- General Meeting, Brighton: 26 September
- GMC Meeting, Brighton: 26 September
- LGMA Conference, Bridport: 3-5 October