President’s Message

As I watched and read the reports on Anzac Day, I was so proud of the significant role Local Government plays on this day - a day that not only marks the anniversary of the landing of our troops at Gallipoli, but where hundreds of thousands of our fellow citizens gather at memorials in cities, suburbs and towns across Australia to commemorate one of the most significant events in our national calendar. It is a real privilege for Local Government to have such a high profile in many of the services around the state and an involvement I believe we execute very well.

As is always the case, there are many issues that continue to occupy our interest and time:

- We need to consider the implications of the interim report of the Parliamentary Inquiry into Water and Sewerage and the Special Meeting of the Association on Friday, 13 May will be an extremely important one. I have been tempted to say that as far as the pricing of these services is concerned, the Government got us into this problem by introducing a price cap. It is therefore up to them to get us out of the dilemma! However, taking a more responsible view of the situation, we do need to ensure, as far as we are able, that we get ourselves into a position of influencing what might be an acceptable outcome.

- Information sessions are currently being held around the state for elected members to understand how the important new rating tools proposed in the Local Government Amendment Bill 2011 can assist councils in the 2011-2012 rating year. I am aware that sessions have already been held in the North and North-West and I trust that the information provided has been useful. Next week, on 4 May, the program will be delivered in Hobart and although all councils will not feel the need to take advantage of the changes, it is a good opportunity to hear why the changes are to be introduced and why councils may consider their use.

- A media release from the Local Government Minister earlier this week advises that feedback is now being sought from local councils as the next step towards a proposed amnesty on illegal residences in Tasmania. I am sure this will be of great interest for councils in some areas of the state.

To the elected members who have put their names forward for consideration in the upcoming Legislative Council elections on 7 May, I offer you my very best wishes. As an aside, I was interested to read in The Examiner this week that retiring member, the Hon Don Wing said that earlier in his parliamentary career he was quite able to carry out the responsibilities of both Mayor of Launceston and Legislative Council Member!

Addressing the Gender Imbalance in Local Government

A series of workshops will be held across Tasmania as part of a drive to address the gender imbalance in Local Government. WomenCan is an ongoing campaign to increase women’s participation in Local Government by providing encouragement, information and support to women interested in nominating for Tasmanian Local Government Elections. The workshops will be held in Hobart on 2 May; in Devonport on 16 May, and in Launceston on 17 May. WomenCan is an initiative of the Premier’s Local Government Council and is supported by the Australian Local Government Women’s Association (Tasmania), and LGAT. The 2011 Local Government election nominations open from 12-26 September and voting will take place from 11-25 October. For further information about the WomenCan workshops, or to register, email Cllr Alwyn Friedersdorf at alwyn@wolfscraft.com. Details about the WomenCan program, can be found at wilg@dpac.tas.gov.au.

Consultation on Amnesty for Illegal Residences

The Minister for Planning, Bryan Green, has announced that feedback is now being sought from local councils as the next step towards a proposed amnesty on illegal residences in Tasmania. The one-off reprieve for residences that currently breach council planning and building laws would be an opportunity for people to establish the validity of their homes. It would also assist people considering selling their home that may have concerns in relation to vendor disclosure laws. Any person seeking a permit under the amnesty would be required to ensure that their residence meets the minimum building, health and safety standards. Mr Green said it was important to consult with local councils before proceeding with the amnesty because they are responsible for building and planning enforcement. If given the go ahead, legislation allowing for an amnesty would be put forward later this year.
Community Satisfaction Survey
Myriad Research will be conducting the biannual, statewide Community Satisfaction Survey this year, with interviews occurring from 29 April to 15 May. This is the fourth such survey canvassing views on Local Government activity across the state. The survey may trigger some calls to councils. Residents may call to verify that this is a Local Government survey and to find out what it is about. If there are any concerns raised, please direct them to Brian Correy at Myriad Research, phone 6244 2807. Results of the last survey can be found on the LGAT website at www.lgat.tas.gov.au.

Exhibition Space Available at Local Government Conference
LGAT is pleased to deliver a large trade exhibition at the annual Local Government Conference which, this year, will take place on 21-22 July at Wrest Point in Hobart. Already confirmed are companies from the banking and insurance sectors, education and recreation sectors, accommodation providers, the printing and building industries. The trade exhibition provides a once-a-year opportunity to launch your new product or to showcase your services to Tasmanian Local Government’s key decision-makers. Exhibitors have the opportunity to liaise directly with delegates during all meal breaks throughout the two-day conference. Places are going fast so don’t miss out, book your space today. For a copy of the Sponsor and Trade Prospectus, head to www.lgat.tas.gov.au/site/page.cfm?u=209, or phone Stephanie Watson on (03) 6233 5119.

Regional Development Australia Fund Deadline Near
The Regional Development Australia Fund’s (RDAF) first round is closing on 13 May. Councils are reminded that as part of the application process, the RDA Tasmania Committee must endorse your project prior to the application being lodged. Therefore, applications must be forwarded to RDA Tasmania one week prior to the closing date to allow sufficient time to facilitate the endorsement process. RDA Tasmania cannot guarantee an endorsement letter requested after 6 May. As applications are lodged online, applicants are encouraged to save their responses to the application questions in a Word document, to be sent to RDA Tasmania to assess for a letter of endorsement. Applicants are encouraged to frequently visit the Australian Government’s RDAF website at www.regional.gov.au/regional/programs/rdaf.aspx, as the information is regularly updated. The RDAF guidelines are available at www.rdatasmania.org.au.

New Website to Help Councils Respond to Impacts of Drugs and Alcohol
A new website has been launched to assist councils in addressing the impacts of drugs and alcohol in their communities. The Local Government Alcohol and Drugs Info Net (LGADIN) is aimed at building and enhancing the capacity of local councils to reduce the harm of drugs and alcohol. This is the first time in Australia that Local Government has had a dedicated website to assist councils to improve their response in this area. LGADIN provides information on upcoming events, the latest news and a discussion forum for councils to participate in knowledge sharing. The website can be found at www.lgadin.gov.au.

Road Safety Award 2011
A new Australian Road Safety Award has been launched for road safety practitioners, including road engineers, road safety officers, asset managers and town planners. Practitioners can submit innovative, cost-effective road safety initiatives which they have recently developed that stand out from normal practice and deliver significant improvements in road safety for the community. An individual team leader from the winning project will receive a trip to the USA to attend the 42nd ATSSA Annual Convention and Traffic Expo in Florida in February 2012 and then travel to the 3M Company Headquarters in Minnesota. Entries close on 1 August. For further information, visit www.acrs.org.au/award, or contact the Australasian College of Road Safety on (02) 6290 2509.

Protect Yourself Against Flu This Winter
Tasmanians are being urged to top up their influenza protection ahead of the winter flu season. The flu vaccine helps protect against three influenza viruses including human swine flu, which is again expected to be a common strain of flu in Australia this year. Tasmanians at risk of severe influenza include people aged 65 and over, Indigenous people, pregnant women, people from six months of age with underlying medical conditions. Free vaccinations are available for these groups through general practitioners and other immunisation providers.

Conferences and Workshops
The Future of Small Farming in Australia
On 4 May, ABC Radio National host, Phillip Adams, will host a public forum in Burnie Arts and Function Centre on the future of small farming in Australia. North-West Tasmania has some of the richest farming land in the country and numerous dairy and vegetable farmers are being driven out of the industry. This is an issue of great local and national significance. Those who are interested are invited to come along and contribute. Footage from the forum will be broadcast on the same night on ABC’s Late Night Live program. Please arrive at 6.30pm for a 7.00pm start at the Burnie Arts and Function Centre. Bookings are not required.
The Tasmanian AUSTSWIM Conference (Launceston)

Swim instructors and pool managers are invited to attend the AUSTSWIM Conference, being held on 22 May in Launceston. There will be sessions on livening up your infants, teaching adults, and keeping the presquad swimmer interested and challenged. Other topics of interest will include pool life saving as a sport, voice protection in the pool and what you need to know about asthma. The conference costs $120 per person, or $75 for a half day. Registration forms are available from the Royal Life Saving Tasmania website at www.tas.royallifesaving.com.au, or contact the office on 62437558.

Waste Reduction Opportunities and Audit Workshop (Melbourne)

The cost of waste treatment and disposal, and the increase in government levies are placing an increasing burden on business however, significant savings can be made through better waste management and minimisation. The Australian Environment Business Network (AEBN) has designed the Waste Reduction Opportunities and Audit Workshop to identify the potential waste and cost savings to be made; provide an update of waste regulations, your liabilities and obligations; and the tools for the development and implementation of an effective Waste / Resource Management Plan. The workshop will be held in Melbourne on 8 June. The cost is $485 (AEBN Members) and $615 (non-members). Register online at www.aebn.com.au/default.asp?_=Register&FormID=5.

DigiTech 2011: The Next Frontier

Businesses continue to advance their marketing strategies as competition stiffens across all sectors. With digital industry poised to grow more than 17% annually in the next five years, it is paramount for marketers to understand the digital environment with sound knowledge from accurate and analytical data and consumer behaviour insights. The DigiTech 2011 conference, to be held in Sydney on 9-10 June, is aimed at helping delegates embrace and fully master the digital landscape of the 21st century with an innovative mindset and result-oriented strategies. Register three delegates or more and benefit from a 10% saving. To register, visit www.marcusevansassets.com/doc/pdfs/Ep_17635.pdf.

Designing Improved Performance Measurement Systems (Hobart)

The Australasian Evaluation Society (AES) will host a workshop at UTAS in Hobart, on 27 June, on Designing Improved Performance Measurement Systems. The workshop will enable participants to design a new or improved set of performance measures for their organisation or program, and will adopt a systems approach. Delegates will: find out what works and what doesn’t in performance measurement; understand the difference between establishing a system of performance measures and developing individual performance measures; discuss the criteria for good performance measurement systems and measures; and will have the opportunity to work on a particular case study. Anyone involved in designing performance measurement systems, or who has the responsibility to collect, assess or report on the performance of organisations is invited to attend. The cost (incl. GST) is $410 (AES members), or $553 (non-members). For further details, contact Dr Jenny Kerrison on 041 833 6402.

Asset Management for Buildings (Launceston)

IPWEA will present a two-day workshop for practitioners in Building Asset Management from 5-6 July in Launceston. The workshop will focus on the practicalities of how to prepare and undertake a building condition survey including data analysis, reporting and more. Building asset practitioners from Local Government are encouraged to attend. The cost is $1,210 (inc GST) per participant and $264 (incl. GST) for a copy of the Practice Notes 3 - Building Condition and Performance Assessment Guidelines. For details, visit www.ipwea.org.au/BuildingsWorkshops.

Generating Revenue for Councils - the Politics and Art (Hobart, Launceston)

Does your council require additional revenue options to meet the increasing expectations of your community? Are you taking full advantage of the billions of dollars available each year from state and federal agencies? Are you ready to be up-skilled in how to: develop a sustainable third revenue stream for your council; accelerate delivery of council programs and infrastructure; receive your fair share of available government funding; ensure better stewardship of your council’s existing resources; and enhance your council’s reputation as “good to do business with”? Training sessions will be held in Hobart on 26 July and in Launceston on 28 July. The cost is $200 (+ GST) and includes a comprehensive manual. To register, please contact Anne Petch on 0427 853 731, or email info@fundingpartnershipsaustralia.com.au.

Upcoming Events

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<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>General Management Committee Meeting, Hobart</td>
<td>11 May</td>
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<td>LGMA Congress, Cairns</td>
<td>22-25 May</td>
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<td>National General Assembly, Canberra</td>
<td>19-23 June</td>
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<td>AGM/General Meeting, Hobart</td>
<td>20 July</td>
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<tr>
<td>Local Government Conference, Hobart</td>
<td>21-22 July</td>
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