President’s Message

With the Water and Sewerage Corporations Bill now passed through the Parliament, the implementation phase of the reforms begins in earnest.

The original water and sewerage working party, established to negotiate the new structures and arrangements, has transitioned to the Implementation Joint Steering Committee comprising Mike Gaffney (Chair - LGAT), Allan Garcia (LGAT), Don Challen (Treasury), Rob Nicholl (Treasury), Frank Dixon (Launceston City Council), Brent Armstrong (Hobart City Council), Paul Arnold (Burnie City Council), Frank Pearce (Glenorchy City Council), Gary Swain and Jason O’Neil (Treasury). The first meeting of the Steering Committee, held on 3 June, resolved to invite General Managers Ron Sanderson (Brighton Council), John Martin (Dorset Council) and Greg Winton (Circular Head Council) to join the committee to allow a cross section of smaller, regional councils to be represented on the new group.

The items listed for discussion included: a project update, implementation schedule, regulatory reform update, structural reform discussion including implementation governance and transitional funding, Board and CEO appointments, constitutions, communications protocol and the future of stormwater.

Everyone appreciates that this is a most important project and there is a mountain of work to be completed in a relatively short period of time. Mayors, elected members and general managers will be updated regularly and individual councils and regions will need to be proactive in meeting their obligations to ensure the transition process stays on track.

Information forwarded to councils will also be reinforced by correspondence from LGAT staff and further discussions, which will be held at regional meetings of general managers. CEO, Allan Garcia will also outline the process of the Water and Sewerage reforms at the upcoming LGAT Conference to better inform delegates of the progress of the work being undertaken by the Joint Steering Committee on behalf of the councils.

Some 18 months ago, Local Government was potentially going to lose control of water and sewerage and, whilst we now find ourselves in unchartered waters, it is imperative that we get on with the job and work as constructively as possible for the sake of our communities and our workforce.

Last Chance to Register for Local Government Conference

Don’t miss the opportunity to register for the 2008 Tasmanian Local Government Conference, to be held at the Launceston Country Club from 18-20 June. An exciting line-up of speakers and events will ensure a valuable and memorable experience for delegates.

This year’s program has been extended to include a series of concurrent workshops for council officers, managers and Local Government affiliates who are unable to attend the full conference but who are keen to hear ideas and solutions from a range of experts about current issues affecting Local Government. Topics include: Tasmania Together: Achieving the Vision, Meetings without Discussion – Dialogue as a vehicle for change, Packaging Waste Solutions: All Wrapped Up, Community Focus Groups – Practical Ideas for Successful Outcomes, and Working in a New Water Industry. Cost is $95 (incl GST and meal break) per session.

The Civic Mutual Plus Waves of Change Dinner, to be held at the Albert Hall, promises to be a highlight of the conference. Guests will enjoy a 3-course dinner and drinks, the announcement of the winners of the 2008 Local Government Awards for Excellence, and entertainment by Tasdance and Midnight Rendezvous. Tickets are $140. A free shuttle service will be available for delegates staying at the Country Club. All welcome!

Registration forms are available from the LGAT website at www.lgat.tas.gov.au, under Meetings and Events/Conference, or by phoning (03) 6233 5966.

Clarence Recycled Water Scheme Awarded for Environmental Excellence

Clarence City Council has won a prestigious Tasmanian Award for Environmental Excellence for the Clarence Recycled Water Scheme.

The award recognised the scheme as setting a new benchmark in environmental protection and preservation while encouraging responsible regional development.

The Clarence Recycled Water Scheme diverts treated effluent from the Derwent estuary to irrigation, has the potential to free up hundreds of litres of mains water, and protects sensitive native habitat and aquaculture industries.
WANTED – Careers Officer
The Local Government Association of Tasmania has advertised for a Careers Officer to work in the Hobart office for 3 days per week until 30 June 2010. The successful applicant will be taking a leadership role in addressing issues related to skills shortages within Local Government including recruitment, retention and capacity building. The position description is available on the website at www.lgat.tas.gov.au, or can be obtained by emailing LGAT at admin@lgat.tas.gov.au. Applications close on 27 June.

Local Government Youth Services Survey Report
LGAT recently received a copy of the Local Government Youth Services Survey Report for 2005-06 and 2006-07 from the Office of Children and Youth Affairs (OCYA). The survey is conducted biannually and the 2005-2007 survey received responses from 22 councils. It was noted that the majority of responding councils have a youth policy and youth advisory mechanisms in place. Additionally, there appears to have been an increase in hours and officers dedicated to youth issues. It was also noted however, that because not all councils responded, and because some councils provided incomplete surveys, there was difficulty in interpreting some data sets. The OCYA is intending to modify the survey to address these issues and to improve the applicability to Local Government in future. The report can be found on the web at www.dpac.tas.gov.au/divisions/ocyia/documents/The_Local_Government_Youth_Services_LGYS_%20Survey_Report_for_2005-2006_2006-2007.pdf.

Tasmanian Local Government Election Report
The Tasmanian Electoral Commission has released the Tasmanian Local Government Election Report 2007. For the October 2007 elections, there were a total of 307 candidates nominated for 149 councilor positions, 54 candidates nominated for 29 mayoral positions and 83 candidates nominated for deputy mayoral positions. Just 57.43% of Local Government electors across the state returned their vote, slightly less than during the previous election in 2005 (58.32%), although smaller councils continue to show higher response rates. For more information, visit www.electoral.tas.gov.au/pages/LocalGovernmentMain.html.

Review of the Protection of Agricultural Land Policy
The State Government has sent a revised State Policy on the Protection of Agricultural Land (PAL) to the Resource Planning and Development Commission (RPDC) for assessment as a new State Policy. In order to give immediate effect to the revised policy, the Government intends to introduce it as an Interim State Policy. It is expected that the RPDC assessment of the revised PAL Policy could take up to a year to complete and will include a comprehensive public consultation process. The draft policy and supporting documentation can be found on the RPDC website at www.rpdc.tas.gov.au.

Public Input Welcome into Cave Management
The State Parks and Wildlife Service is seeking public input into the management of the extensive cave and karst systems in Southern Tasmania. The recently updated Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area Management Plan has highlighted the significance and sensitivity of the caves, many of which have extremely delicate formations created over millions of years. The draft plan aims to address these issues by identifying the most suitable caves for different activities, such as tourism, recreational caving and scientific research. An introduction paper and survey are available at www.parks.tas.gov.au, or by phoning 6264 8460 (Parks Shop, Huonville), or 6288 1149 (Mt Field). Further community consultation will be held in August and a draft plan will be available for formal public comment in late 2008.

Call for New Members of the Positive Ageing Consultative Committee
Older Tasmanians in the community are invited to apply to become members of the Positive Ageing Consultative Committee (PACC). Four new members will be chosen to serve two-year terms on the 12 member PACC. Members will ideally be older Tasmanians with a good understanding of positive ageing issues, particularly those from the Midlands, Huon, Derwent Valley, Channel, East and West Coasts. Further details about the role and structure of PACC and an information kit and application form are available on the Seniors Bureau website at www.seniors.tas.gov.au, or by phoning 6233 4014. Expressions of interest close on 4 July.

Search Begins for Community Achievers
The search is on for individual high achievers, businesses, events and tourism operators, environmental groups, volunteers, young achievers, towns and communities that have made a difference to regional Tasmania through their hard work, dedication and innovation. The Community Achievement Awards will be launched in Hobart and Launceston on 11 June and in Burnie on 12 June. If you know an individual or group making a difference in the community, then you are strongly encouraged to attend one of the launches. For more information, phone 1300 556 265, email cao@awardsaustralia.com, or visit www.awardsaustralia.com. Nomination forms will be available at the launches or from Commonwealth Bank branches, Southern Cross Television or by phoning 1300 556 265. Nominations close on 29 August.
Breakfast Seminar – Leadership Styles in Your Organisational Zoo
The Australian Institute of Management is holding a breakfast seminar in Hobart on 31 July, featuring guest speaker Arthur Shelley, Managing Director of Intelligent Answers. The seminar will provide an overview of a new and unique way of profiling leader's behaviours. Arthur will focus on the behavioural styles which are associated with leadership and will explore ways to apply these concepts in business organisations. For further information, or to make a booking, visit www.aimvic.com.au/apps/events/event.php?EventID=940&eventCatSelected=88.

Clarence Secures $10.5M Grant to Build on Environmental Success
Clarence City Council has been successful in securing a $10.5M grant from the Australian Government to extend its award winning Clarence Recycled Water Scheme. The funds, an election pledge by the Rudd government, will enable Council to further its aim of preventing treated effluent from flowing into the Derwent estuary. The treated effluent will be available for agricultural and horticultural businesses within the City. The newly available resource will also assist in drought proofing vulnerable rural regions.

Upcoming Training Consortium Courses
The Training Consortium has scheduled the following upcoming courses:
- Critical Reasoning, Analysis and Decision-making – 12 June, Hobart
- 4WD and Recovery (Basic) – 18 June, Baskerville
- Records Management (Using the Keyword for Councils Thesaurus) – 18 June, Hobart
- Delivering Convincing Presentations – 24 June, Launceston
For further information, visit www.ttc.tas.gov.au, or phone 6233 6459.

ABS Training – Turning Data into Information
The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) is offering a two-day course in Hobart from 11-12 June on interpreting, communicating and displaying data clearly and effectively. Participants will gain skills in transforming data into meaningful written information, particularly in respect to social policy issues. The course will be beneficial to people who use data to produce reports or social commentary, or people who are involved with monitoring and evaluation in a social context. For more information, email ABS at training@abs.gov.au. For general information regarding external training with ABS, visit www.abs.gov.au.

National Local Roads and Transport Congress
The National Local Roads and Transport Congress Securing the First Mile will be held in Shepparton, Victoria from 15-17 June. Information and registration brochures are available from the ALGA website at www.alga.asn.au. In view of the great interest shown by delegates in the two Public Relations sessions facilitated by Crispin Hull, Crispin has agreed to hold a third session. This session will be available at no extra charge and on a first come, first served basis. For details, contact Clare Hogan on (02) 6122 9436 or email clare.hogan@alga.asn.au.

National Environment Conference
The Local Government Association of Queensland is hosting a National Environment Conference in Port Douglas from 9 – 11 July. Councils from across Australia are invited to attend to hear the latest news and share their experiences with other councils. Conference themes will include Natural Resource Management, Sustainable Purchasing, Sustainability Action, Ecologically Sustainable Development, Waste Management, Water Management and Climate Change (mitigation, adaptation, litigation, carbon accounting and trading). For further information, contact Paul Barnes on (08) 8936 2879.

IPWEA National Conference on Climate Change
The IPWEA National Conference on Climate Change – Responding to Sea Level Rise – Engineering Practical Climate Change Solutions is being held from 3 – 5 August in Coffs Harbour, NSW. The aim is to share ideas and to learn how other council staff and consultants are innovating and developing adaptation responses to sea level rise. Registrations are now open with early bird registration closing on 4 July. For further Information, contact Lita Somogyi on (02) 8267 3001.

Innovation in Planning & Development Assessment Summit
The Innovation in Planning and Development Assessment Summit will be held from 6-7 August in Sydney. The summit will feature presentations about the latest technologies and innovations being used by local governments to improve their planning and development assessment processes. The event will feature a diverse range of speakers, including development planners and other key personnel from local councils, national and state-based planning and government bodies, and planning and development experts. For further information, phone (03) 8534 5000, or email denise.mcqueen@halledit.com.au.

Upcoming Events
General Meeting and Annual General Meeting, Launceston 18 June
2008 Local Government Conference, Launceston 19 – 20 June