President’s Message

As I write this fortnightly column, I am observing the newly born lambs frolicking in the front paddock without an apparent care in the world. If only all of our ratepayers could have the same outlook on life as they go to the letterbox to collect the morning’s mail and proceed to open the letter from council. Yes, it is that time of year when the rate notices are being prepared and distributed, and it can be an interesting time for elected members as they observe the many and varied reactions of ratepayers.

I have been rather fortunate over the past couple of years with only one enquiry each year and, with a very short explanation, they were happily satisfied. This year I received a telephone call expressing concern that the rates for the “beach house” had risen far above CPI (your Council may use the Local Government Index, as my Council does, and then add a bit as recommended by the Access Economics report). I could hardly contain myself as the increase equated to an additional 90 cents per week!

We do need to be diplomatic as we handle rate enquiries but I am sure you would experience occasions when you would really like to “tell it as it is”! All the best for the weeks ahead. I imagine that I will receive more than one phone call this year.

Australian Carbon Trust Funding

The Australian Carbon Trust has recently announced a call for Expressions of Interest for funding to co-invest in energy efficiency projects. The focus on the EOI is to achieve energy efficiency improvements in the buildings sector through retrofits in existing non-residential buildings across Australia - including offices, food and non-food retail, education, community, health, hotels etc - using commercially available technology.

The Australian Carbon Trust will provide financial support to energy efficiency projects by a variety of means including low-interest rate loans, revolving loan arrangements and alternative structures. Local Governments are eligible for the funding. The EOI period ends on 6 August. For more details on the Expressions of Interest, please email eoi@carbontrustaustralia.com.au.

Electoral Commissioner to Retire

Tasmanian Electoral Commissioner, Bruce Taylor, whose electoral career has spanned 26 years, will retire on 4 August. Bruce has overseen the development of the 2004 Electoral Act, which allowed the new Electoral Commission to adopt modern electoral practices and remove the detailed procedures and forms that were prescribed in the old Act. Bruce was also responsible for the development of the postal voting system for Local Government elections. The LGAT would like to thank Bruce for his efforts and assistance over the years, and wish him all the very best for his retirement.

Arts Funding for Regional Communities

The Australian Government is supporting home-grown arts activities in regional Australia with more than $660,000 for 68 new regional arts projects. Through the Regional Arts Fund, artists work with members of regional communities to bring vibrant arts and cultural experiences, including workshops, festivals and performances to regional and remote communities. Regional arts funding also benefits regional and remote community economies by employing artists and developing their skills, as well as attracting tourists. For more information, visit the Regional Arts Australia website at www.regionalarts.com.au/raa1/default.asp.

Clean Energy – Generating Income for Regions

One of 14 people selected from around the world to study finance and investment in a low carbon economy, Caroline Brown has recently returned to Tasmania from the University of Edinburgh. As part of her fellowship, she explored a broad range of climate change topics with international specialists and experts in the field. At a free forum, to be held from 4.00pm – 5.00pm on 3 August, at the UTAS Cradle Coast Campus Cafe, Caroline will discuss sustainable regional development and the economic opportunities that can be generated by clean technology. She will draw on two case studies in the UK that demonstrate the potential of micro-generation and biomass. Please register your interest by 30 July. Email ccc.support@utas.edu.au, or phone 6430 4949.
New Education Program for Local Government Leaders
Due to the Australia and New Zealand School of Government’s (ANZSOG) involvement with the new Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government, a program specifically tailored to the distinctiveness and diversity of Local Government will be offered from this year, dedicated to promoting outstanding public sector leadership. Funded by the Australian, New Zealand and State Governments and working through a network of 15 universities and business schools, ANZSOG has been offering a highly successful, three-week residential program for senior leaders annually since 2002. This year’s program will run from 22 November - 10 December in Melbourne. For further information, email Victoria Musgrove at v.musgrove@anzsof.edu.au, or visit www.anzsog.edu.au.

Waste Water Minimisation and Trade Waste Treatment Plant Management Workshop
While trade waste disposal remains the most cost effective means of disposal of liquid waste for organisations, a number of companies have found significant benefits through harvesting this waste stream for reuse within their industrial processes. Optimising your trade waste treatment plant will ensure compliance with trade waste regulation, and may enable greater waste water reuse. The Australian Environment Business Network (AEBN®) Waste Water Minimisation and Treatment Plant Workshop, to be held in Melbourne on 5 August, will provide information to assist councils to develop systems to maximise their efforts in managing and reusing waste water resources. Cost is $440 (AEBN members) or $485 (non-members). Register on-line at www.aebn.com.au, or phone (03) 9397 2511.

Premises Standards Seminars (Hobart)
The Disability (Access to Premises – Buildings) Standards (Premises Standards) are due to come into force on 1 May 2011. They will lead to significant improvements in the level of access required in new buildings and existing buildings undergoing renovation. It is also anticipated that corresponding changes will be made to the Building Code of Australia at the same time. A half-day seminar will provide designers, builders, building owners, managers, access consultants, advocates and professionals in the building approvals area with an overview of the Premises Standards and their effect when they come into force. The seminar will also be an opportunity for participants to discuss questions on interpretation and contribute to the development of further resources. The seminar, to be held in Hobart on 9 September, will be presented by Michael Small from the Australian Human Rights Commission and Kevin Newhouse from the Australian Building Codes Board. The cost is $100 (online registration) and $115 for other forms of registration. Register online at www.secureregistrations.com/PSAS10/.

Public Consultation on Breaking the Cycle of Disadvantage (Hobart)
You are invited to attend a public consultation from 10.00am – 1.00pm, on 6 September in Hobart, on Breaking the Cycle of Disadvantage, to share your expertise, knowledge and experiences on cycles of disadvantage, and how people avoid or break out of disadvantage. The Australian Social Inclusion Board was established in May 2008 as the main advisory body to the Australian Government on ways to achieve better outcomes for the most disadvantaged. A key component of its role is also to consult widely with different members of the community to provide advice on how to improve social inclusion. The Board is interested in hearing from people with experience and expertise on this topic, including providers of social welfare services, academics, researchers and people who have experienced cycles of disadvantage themselves. Registrations are required by 30 August. To register your interest, email Laura Backhouse at Laura.Backhouse@pmc.gov.au, or phone (02) 6271 6148.

Intensive Management Development Program
The Australian Applied Management Colloquium is a six-month intensive management development program. The Colloquium combines diverse group workshops with customisable one-on-one coaching sessions, and is supported by a National Advisory Board, which includes representation from the Tasmanian Polytechnic and the Workplace Training Advisory of Australia. For the benefit of Tasmanian Local Government employees, the Australian Applied Management Colloquium has established a scholarship program to provide financial assistance towards enrolment in Tasmania’s Inaugural series, which commences in February, 2011, in Hobart. For information regarding the Colloquium and the $6,000 education subsidy for Local Government employees, please visit www.appliedmanagement.com.au, or contact Brendan Maggs on 1300 138 037 or by email at bmaggs@wtaa.com.au.
Australia Day Awards
Nominations for the Australian of the Year Awards 2011 are now open and all Australians are being encouraged to nominate the people they find inspiring for Australian of the Year, Senior Australian of the Year, Young Australian of the Year and Australia’s Local Hero. Now is the time to have your say on who you think represents the best of Australian values, who is doing great things and who makes you proud to be Australian. Nominations close on 31 August. For more information, go to www.australianoftheyear.org.au/media/?view=news&id=699.

Sleeping Out Breakfast (Hobart)
A Sleeping Out Breakfast will be held at the Hotel Grand Chancellor, Hobart on 6 August from 7.15am. During the previous night, a group of invited political, business and community leaders will sleep out in the cold, to raise awareness of housing and homelessness issues around Tasmania as part of National Homeless Persons Week, and to demonstrate the need for greater corporate responsibility for the plight of homeless persons. Join them for breakfast and be present for an interesting and provocative panel discussion with guest speaker, Dr Jed Donoghue. Panel members include representatives from Shelter Tasmania, Anglicare, Centacare, and The Salvation Army. Cost is $32 per head. RSVP by 2 August. Contact Graham Innes on 6228 8422, email graham.innes@aus.salvationarmy.org, or visit www.salvationarmy.org.au/sleepingout.

Calling All Champions
Business Events Tasmania launched a new program designed to secure more business events for Tasmania. The Catalyst Program will provide the platform for Tasmanians to get involved in bidding for events. Tasmanians that know of a conference, corporate meeting, incentive, seminar or exhibition currently held elsewhere, that could be held in Tasmania, are encouraged to provide Business Events Tasmania with information on the event, so they may prepare a comprehensive bid to win that event for the state. The objective of the program is to win more business events, and the subsequent economic and social benefits, for Tasmania. In the 2009/10 financial year, Business Events Tasmania won 106 bids for business events, valued at over $31 million dollars. Tasmanians that would like to be involved should contact Business Events Tasmania on (03) 6224 6852 or visit www.businesseventstasmania.com.au/catalyst.

4th International Biennial Parks Leadership Conference
Parks leaders and managers are invited come together at Luna Park in Sydney from 24-26 August to discuss working together in the face of rapid social and environmental change, to find common ground across constituencies of interest, to sustain parks and green space into the future. A range of local and international speakers will address issues including population growth and urban development, modelling cross sector partnerships, economic sustainability, marketing and branding, and engaging the next generation. To register, visit www.parksforum2010.org and complete the registration form.

Australian Regional Tourism Convention
Tourism is the lifeblood of many regional communities, employing more than 14,300 Tasmanians and contributing $2 billion each year to the state’s economy. The annual Australian Regional Tourism Convention is the premier national event for regional tourism professionals and will this year be held from 16-20 August in the Yarra Valley & Dandenongs region of Victoria. The convention is the only opportunity for all industry stakeholders to come together to debate, discuss and determine the future of regional tourism. For further information, go to www.regionaltourism.com.au, or phone (02) 6620 3785.

PR and Corporate Communications Conference
On 10 August, communications practitioners are invited to attend the PR and Corporate Communications Conference in Sydney. The conference covers every aspect of a modern PR practitioner’s role. From the core aspects of PR, such as how to create a communications strategy, to sessions on tactical issues, such as how to get sensational media coverage, crisis communications, what you need to engage bloggers, what works in social media, Government Relations, the upcoming election and much more. Cost is $995 (+ GST). For details, visit www.frocomm.com.au, email glenfrost@frocomm.com.au, or phone (02) 9476 3333.

Upcoming Events
General Management Committee Meeting, Launceston 29 July
Sponsor and Local Government Appreciation Event, Hobart 10 August

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