President’s Message

The three days of conferencing in Hobart are over and I feel that the AGM, General Meeting, Annual Conference and Dinner were a great success!

The Conference was a fitting celebration of the 100th Anniversary of the Local Government Association of Tasmania, with many reminders that we have been 100 years long; 100 years strong. I had been particularly looking forward to the Panel Discussion with past Presidents, and their reflections certainly provided insight into the highs and lows they experienced as leaders. I was left with the impression that the strong support of the membership was essential for these past Presidents, as it is now, to successfully advocate and make changes.

The entries to the Council History Award were another reminder of our past and I was particularly impressed by the high quality and pride evident in the submissions. This Award was designed to celebrate the 100th Anniversary and to provide a comprehensive history of Local Government in Tasmania for display at the Conference. I am not surprised that the judges recommended that copies be lodged with the State Library. Congratulations to Northern Midlands Council for their winning entry, also Brighton and Dorset Councils for their Highly Commended entries, and to all councils that made a submission.

The MAV Insurance Conference Dinner was very enjoyable and I congratulate Cllr Judy Bromfield on receiving the inaugural Life Members Award for Meritorious Service for her years of dedicated service to the Derwent Valley community. Also Break O’ Day Mayor Robert Legge and Cllr Trevor Roach AM of West Tamar Council, who each received a well-earned Local Government Service Award.

Congratulations also to the winners of the Local Government Awards for Excellence, namely: Launceston City Council for their Two Hands Coffee project; Kingborough Council for their Integrated NRM in Kingborough program; and Devonport City Council (on behalf of North West Tasmanian Councils) for their Combined Plant Auction.

Well done to all the winners and our sincere thanks to all sponsors, trade exhibitors, speakers, delegates and staff, for such a positive and productive conference.

Regional Coordinators for Financial Sustainability

Two council activities that contribute to financial sustainability are strategic asset management and long-term financial planning. The Local Government Financial and Asset Reform Project, a partnership between LGAT and the Federal and State Governments, aims to implement frameworks and better integrate both long-term financial planning and asset management in all Tasmanian councils. The project was designed to provide hands-on assistance to councils in writing asset management plans and also training for both council staff and elected members. One of the ways to achieve this is to recruit three regional coordinators from within councils for a short period of time. This will provide momentum for a regional team approach, staff development opportunities and some local faces to champion the project. For further information, contact the Project Manager at LGAT on 6233 5962.

Big Run 4A Cure

David Williams, a fit, 64-year-old from Flinders Island is busy training, between his council duties, for a charity run on 30 October - raising funds for Cure Cancer Australia. The Big Run covers the 76km length of Flinders Island from Palana boat ramp to the Lady Barron wharf, over bitumen and gravel roads. It’s believed to be the first time running the full distance of the island in a solo effort has been attempted. David is inviting people to join him along the way, to run part of the distance and make a donation. There’s also a competition on the island to guess how long it will take for David to finish the race at cost of $10 a guess. David seeks your support. Please make a donation at www.gofundraise.com.au/page/Thebigrun.
Local Government Encouraged to Comment on Draft Rail Safety Laws
A proposed National Rail Safety Law may impact on local road managers carrying out works near a railway, or when contemplating interface agreements with rail transport operations. The proposed Law will be administered by a new National Rail Safety Regulator, to be introduced by 2013. Submissions are invited by the National Transport Commission and close on 12 August. Information forums will be held during July and August. For further details, visit www.ntc.gov.au/viewpage.aspx?Areaid=34&DocumentId=1925.

Sport and Recreation Tasmania 2011-12 Grant Program
Local Government entities, clubs and not-for-profit organisations that provide sport and recreation opportunities to the community are invited to apply for the Sport and Recreation Grant Program for 2011-12. This funding is provided to increase participation in sport and active recreation in Tasmania and to assist in the development of the sector. Applicants are advised to contact the department prior to making a submission and further details can be found at www.sportandrecreation.tas.gov.au/sportrectas/funding_opportunities/grant programs.

How Walkable is your Community?
Walking remains the most common form of physical activity for Tasmanian adults and, with the majority of walking occurring on streets and footpaths, creating environments that support walking is an important role for Local Government. The Heart Foundation’s Neighbourhood Walkability Checklist is a national consumer advocacy tool to assist planners and other Local Government professionals to improve neighbourhoods for walking. A checklist is now available to ascertain how walkable your community is. Community members can also be encouraged to complete the checklist to provide valuable information on walking routes in your area. Contact the Heart Foundation for a kit, including the checklist and other resources, to help you determine the features in your area that either support or discourage walking. For more information, call 6336 5116.

Suicide Prevention Australia LIFE Award 2011
The LIFE Awards are presented each year by Suicide Prevention Australia and nominations are now open. They aim to recognise the outstanding and exciting work conducted within the suicide prevention sector by individuals, communities and business. There are now 11 categories under the award reflecting the changing nature of suicide prevention and the growing means in which it is undertaken. These include Public Sector, Health Communities (both individual and organisation), Public Sector and Social Media. The awards close on 26 August and will be presented on World Suicide Prevention Day, 10 September in Melbourne, with all winners receiving an expenses paid trip to receive their award. Nomination forms can be found at www.suicidepreventionaust.org/nominations.

Saving World Heritage - Keeping your Gear Clean and Dry
That’s the message behind NRM South’s Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area Biosecurity Extension Project aiming to ensure that pests and diseases are not carried into World Heritage Areas. Research shows that human activities like walking, driving and boating are the main ways pests and diseases are moved from one area to another, with infected water, mud and vegetation being the main culprits for transmission. The project aims to make it second nature for all professionals and recreational users to clean and dry their boots and equipment when moving between sites. NRM South in conjunction with Hydro Tasmania will be conducting ongoing training in biosecurity practices for organisations working in or around the World Heritage Area. For further information on the training or to access the best practice hygiene protocols in the Keeping It Clean manual refer to the NRM South website – www.nrmsouth.org.au.

Dangerous Goods Storage and Handling Workshop
The Australian Environment Business Network (AEBN) is conducting two workshops at Introductory and Intermediate level for Dangerous Goods Storage and Handling in Melbourne on 17 August. The morning session is at the introductory level and will include an overview of existing regulations, understanding terminology and the use of Australian Standards. Further information can be found at www.aebn.com.au.

Enforcing Contracts and Effective Technical Report Writing for Engineers and Technicians
A one-day training seminar entitled Contract Law for Non-lawyers, will be held in Sydney, Melbourne, Canberra and Brisbane during August. Participants will learn how to enforce a contract, how to avoid misunderstanding and legal commitment during contractual negotiations, how to include contractual terms which reflect your company’s interest and what to in the event of a breach of contract. There is also a two-day course to be held in September in Brisbane and Sydney aimed at engineers and technicians writing technical reports. The training will provide skills and conventions for defining messages, creating the right impression with readers and effectively delivering information. For further information on either training course, please phone Tonkins on (02) 9224 6055.

Draft Hobart Rivulet Park Strategic Master Plan
The Hobart City Council has released for public exhibition a draft Hobart Rivulet Park Strategic Master Plan. It will guide the future management and development of parkland and open space along the Hobart Rivulet. Copies of the plan and further details, including public information sessions to be held at South Hobart Primary School can be found on the Council website at www.hobartcity.com.au.