President's Message
At the Local Government Association’s first general meeting of 2007, guest speaker Mr Rod Meldrum from the Department of Health and Human Services delivered a presentation primarily focused on potential disasters, emergency management and the roles and responsibilities of local councils.

While all councils hope that they will never be required to put into action their emergency management plan, the presentation highlighted the important role that councils play in emergencies.

Port Arthur, Beaconsfield and more recently the East Coast bushfires are examples of emergencies that caused communities to endure significant pressure, grief, anxiety, fear, media attention and public scrutiny. In each case it was heartening to see the positive role respective councils played.

As well as each council having an emergency management plan, often in association with neighbouring councils, Local Government is also party to a broader statewide strategy. Rod reinforced that the success of the statewide strategy relies heavily on the support of Local Government and that the contribution of Tasmanian councils to the strategy has been exceptional.

The general message delivered by Rod was that effective management of disasters requires a practical approach. As every emergency presents a unique set of challenges, it is important that emergency management plans are flexible and adaptable. Furthermore it was acknowledged that with each emergency, plans are continually refined and improved. While it is impossible to predetermine every impact or scenario which might arise, pre planning and an understanding of the issues are imperative for the best possible outcomes. I felt it was an excellent and worthwhile presentation.

International Women's Day
To mark International Women’s Day, ALGA President, Cr Paul Bell, joined with the Australian Local Government Women’s Association (ALGWA) to urge more women to consider Local Government, either by standing for office or as a career option.

While women are participating in Local Government in greater numbers than ever before, women represent just 27.8 per cent of Australia’s 6,566 elected Local Government representatives. ALGWA aims to encourage and support women’s involvement and participation in Local Government throughout Australia. For more information refer to www.algwa.net.au.

Local Government Awards for Excellence
The Local Government Awards for Excellence recognise council initiatives that demonstrate excellence in the five category areas:
- Building Better Futures Through Governance
- Developing Council People
- Innovation and Creativity
- Invigorating Communities
- Sustainable Community Assets

Further details and entry forms are available on the LGAT website at www.lgat.tas.gov.au.

The Awards will be presented at the 2007 LGAT Conference Dinner on 31 May.

Air Regulations Workshops
The Environment Division of the Department of Tourism, Arts and the Environment is conducting workshops for Local Government Officers regarding the proposed regulations on domestic solid fuel burning appliances and backyard burning.

The purpose of the workshops is to inform Local Government Officers of the new provisions and to provide information to assist in the implementation of the proposed regulations. The closing date for registration is Thursday 12 April 2007 for all workshops. To register call LGAT on 6233 5960.

Workshops will be held:
- Tuesday 17 April, 9am – 3:30pm
  Environment Division, 6th Floor Conference room, 134 Macquarie Street, Hobart.
- Wednesday 18 April, 9am – 3:30pm
  Inveresk Tramshed Function Centre, 4 Invermay Road, Launceston.
- Thursday 19 April, 9am – 3:30pm
  Burnie Civic Centre, Wilmot Street, Burnie.

Farewell Alderman Blizzard
It is with great sadness that LGAT acknowledges the passing of Alderman Jan Blizzard on 8 March 2007. Alderman Blizzard was elected to Burnie City Council in 2000. Our sincere condolences to friends and family of Alderman Blizzard.

Councillor Workshop
A reminder that registrations are still being accepted for the Using Computers to Communicate Effectively in Local Government councillor workshop in Hobart on 31 March. To register phone LGAT on 6233 5960.
Latrobe Council General Manager to Retire
After 42 years in Local Government General Manager Grant Atkins will retire in July this year. Grant has been General Manager of the Latrobe Council since 1996 and is held in high regard among both the community and his colleagues. The Latrobe community is fortunate to have had Grant as General Manager and wish him and Jan all the very best. The Latrobe General Manager’s position will be advertised on Saturday 17 March. More information is available at www.latrobe.tas.gov.au.

SkillsLink – New Website to Assist Employers
SkillsLink provides access to information on skills and training and related matters, and is primarily targeted at employers. It contains 2 groups of links:
- general resources - contains links to general skills and training matters, including: labour market, research, occupation information, industry councils and bodies, and subsidies for training; and
- industry specific - specific to Tasmanian industries, and includes links to: training demand profiles, Training Package information, industry bodies, skills initiatives in that industry.
To access the site visit http://www.education.tas.gov.au/tlsa/skillslink.

First Local Government Emissions Trading Scheme to be Trialed
A group of New South Wales councils are looking to establish an Australian-first greenhouse gas emissions trading scheme for Local Government. Randwick, Botany and Waverley Councils recently announced plans to launch the trial-run of an emissions trading scheme. For more information about the emissions trading trial phone Randwick City Council’s Manager Sustainability, Peter Maganov, on (02) 9399 0554.

Managing Primary Health Care Change for Rural Communities Workshop
The University Department of Rural Health, Tasmania is offering a 3-day workshop on “Managing Primary Health Care Change for Rural Communities”. The workshop will explain what primary health care is within the contemporary rural health context, identify the driving forces for change within the rural practice context, apply theoretical perspectives of change management to particular contexts, and identify appropriate strategies for facilitating change. The workshop will be held on 5 and 24 April and 29 May at The Grange in Campbell Town. The workshop is free of charge and lunch is provided. For further information, please refer to http://www.ruralhealth.utas.edu.au/events/.

2007 Tasmanian Awards for Environmental Excellence
Entries are invited for the 2007 Tasmanian Awards for Environmental Excellence. The Awards seek to reward and recognise those who contribute to the enhancement, preservation and protection of the Tasmanian environment. Submissions are due by Friday 13 April. Further information and entry forms are available at www.environment.tas.gov.au/awards or by contacting Tony Port on (03) 6233 2066 or by email at tony.port@environment.tas.gov.au.

Women in Local Government Breakfast - Hobart '07 Congress
The LGMA Women in Local Government Sub-Committee will host a networking breakfast at the Hobart '07 Congress. The Australian Local Government Women’s Association will launch the Review Findings of the National Framework for Women in Local Government at the breakfast on the Wednesday morning. For further information refer to www.lgma.org.au/national/national_congress.php.

National & Special Interest Event Grant Program
The National & Special Interest Event Grant Program is a Tasmanian Government initiative to encourage clubs, associations and special interest groups to consider Tasmania as the location for their next event, championship or gathering. Events must attract a minimum of 50 people to Tasmania, staying in licensed commercial accommodation for a minimum stay of 3 nights. Events that qualify for support will be published on the Tasmanian Events Calendar (www.discovertasmania.com/events). Applications must be submitted by 30 April for an event to be staged in the following calendar year. Further information and application forms are available on-line at www.eventstasmania.com/grantprograms.

2007 Community Engagement Project
Organisations managing community-based or regional development initiatives, are invited to apply for funding under the 2007 Community Engagement Project. Funded by the Australian Flexible Learning Framework, this project aims to foster and establish e-learning within some of Australia’s most disadvantaged communities and strengthen the foundation of the workforce skills. For application guidelines and forms go to www.flexiblelearning.net.au/flx/go/home/projects/pid/264.

Australian Tourism Development Program
The Commonwealth Government has invited applications for the fourth round of the Australian Tourism Development Program (ATDP). The program provides financial grants from $50,000 to $500,000 for innovative regional tourism development projects. Further information can be accessed at www.ausindustry.gov.au, or by calling the AusIndustry hotline on 13 28 46. Applications close on Friday 27 April 2007.

Upcoming Events
- Elected Members IT Workshop - Launceston, 18 March
- Elected Members IT Workshop - Hobart, 31 March
- General Management Committee Meeting - Campbell Town, 18 April
- Annual General Meeting/General Meeting - Hobart, 30 May
- LGAT Conference - Hobart, 30 May -1 June