Acting President’s Message

With increasing public scrutiny of the performance of councils, it is imperative that the measures that are used to gauge whether results are being achieved are valid and precise.

In recent times the Auditor General has weighed into the space and has reported on the financial sustainability of councils in some detail. Against a backdrop of averaging over a four-year period and the implications of water and sewerage reform, we have probably not gained an absolute picture of how councils are faring but there is a sufficient information to make a reasonably informed judgement. The important thing is that no council is deemed to be financially unsustainable.

Councils have provided details for annual reporting of performance for the past decade but the measures have tended to be fairly low level and not really indicative of whether a council has been meeting expectations or not. Work has commenced on reinvigorating these measures to better reflect how councils are performing and the areas that may require improvement. There is likely to be some dovetailing with the work of the Auditor General but the overlap will be minimal.

At a time when we are embarking on a process of Local Government reform, the ability to measure results becomes even more important. In order to know where we are going, we must know where we are and how much we need to move to get there. The present performance measurement project takes on an added relevance in this context and it will be important for all councils to consider fully the logic of the proposals being put forward and the challenges they may present in achieving par. It should not be seen as a threat but merely another point on the continuum for improving not only the performance of councils but the way in which the community perceives the efforts of its council.

The project is being conducted jointly by LGAT and the Local Government Division, with initial discussion paper currently in circulation. I encourage you to be actively engaged in the process by making a submission and attending the upcoming workshops.

Community and Economic Development Workshops

RDA Tasmania will be holding two workshops for Community Development Officers and Economic Development Officers in early October. The purpose of the workshops is to develop the professional and personal connections between CDOs and EDOs of Tasmanian councils. The workshops, to be held from 10.00am – 2.00pm, on the 6 October at the Brighton Civic Centre and on 8 October at the Ulverstone Sports Complex, will address broadband in the context of regional development and access to data to support strategic community development. The workshop will also include a facilitated session to encourage knowledge sharing amongst councils. RDA Tasmania will cover the costs of the workshop, including lunch and refreshments. For further details, please contact Brigid Rawlings on 6334 9822, or visit www.rdatasmania.org.au.

Elected Member Planning Course

Registrations are now due for the two-day Planning Course to be held for elected members on 16 October and 20 November at the University of Tasmania campus in Hobart. Councillors will gain a better understanding of Tasmania’s planning system - the Resource Management Planning System (RMPS), its legal framework, purposes, powers and procedures, and of the responsibilities of different individuals and groups within the system. Procedures under the Land Use Planning and Approvals Act (LUPAA) will be a particular focus. Cost is $600 (incl GST). To register, please complete and return the registration form located on the LGAT website at www.lgat.tas.gov.au, or phone 6233 5966.
Sustainability Objectives and Indicators Project

A reminder that registrations for the sustainability objectives and indicators regional workshops are now due. Don’t miss your opportunity to ask questions and have your say at one of the regional workshops. This important project will affect your Council. The project will provide a snapshot of council performance and illustrate the sustainability of councils in terms of their ability to optimise resources and capabilities to ensure high-quality service into the long-term. The workshops will be held at the Glenorchy Civic Centre (23 September), at the Burnie Art and Function Centre (30 September), and at the West Tamar Council Chambers, Riverside (1 October). The consultation paper and registration form are available on the Local Government Division’s website at www.dpac.tas.gov.au/divisions/lgd/measuring_sustainability.

Asset Management for Buildings

IPWEA is conducting a workshop on Asset Management for Buildings in Launceston on 13-14 October. Training is based on the publication Practice Notes 3 – Building Condition and Performance Assessment Guidelines. The publication costs $264 (incl. GST) and it is highly recommended that you have a copy of this publication when attending training. For more information about the practice notes, visit www.ipwea.org.au/practicenotes. The two-day workshop costs $1,100 (incl. GST). Visit www.ipwea.org.au/BuildingsWorkshops, or phone (02) 8267 3001.

Dangerous Goods Storage and Handling

Since 1 January 2010, industry has been required to demonstrate national compliance of the Australian Dangerous Goods Code 7th Edition (ADG7). Organisations must also be able to demonstrate compliance with the Dangerous Goods (Storage and Handling) Regulations 2000. Compliance includes providing appropriate training to your staff that use or handle dangerous goods, and that the appropriate training for hazard identification, risk control mechanisms and risk assessment for your staff has been completed. The Australian Environment Business Network (AEBN) has developed two comprehensive Dangerous Goods Storage and Handling workshops at Introductory Level and Intermediate Level. Both workshops will be held in Melbourne on 7 October. The cost of each workshop is $310 (AEBN member), or $385 (non-member). Register online at www.aebn.com.au, or phone (03) 9397 2511, or email kerrie.frew@aebn.com.au.

2010 Tasmanian LIFE Awards

Nominations are invited for the 2010 Tasmanian LIFE Awards which recognise the life affirming work being carried out in Tasmania in suicide prevention. The awards will be judged in two categories: the Red Herring Surf Social Inclusion Award which recognises activities, programs, policies or support provided in pursuit of socially inclusive communities, and the AAMI Healthy Partnerships Award which recognises those partnerships which have collaboratively produced positive outcomes to enhance their community’s health and wellbeing. The closing date for nominations is 5 November. For a nomination form, visit www.dhhs.tas.gov.au. Under “Search”, type “Tasmanian LIFE Awards”, or phone Statewide and Mental Health Services on 6230 7780.

Health Impact Assessment Short Course

The UDRH will be holding a Health Impact Assessment Short Course in Launceston from 18-20 October. Health Impact Assessment incorporates a social determinants of health approach which recognises that a person’s health is influenced by a range of factors such as income, education, the built environment and social connectedness. The course will provide an overview of the relationship between Health Impact Assessment, Social Impact Assessment and Equity Impact Assessment under the guise of Integrated Impact Assessment. Numbers are strictly limited. For details, visit www.ruralhealth.utas.edu.au/reply/udrh-pdce.php?det_id=5.

Green Purchasing Fundamentals and Frameworks

Environmental procurement is a proven way to reduce an organisation’s environmental impact, improve its efficiencies and deliver cost savings. Local Government employees are invited to take advantage of a 20% discount when they register to attend ECO-Buy’s Green Purchasing Fundamentals and Frameworks course, to be held in Hobart on 28 September. ECO-Buy is a not-for-profit company that has been working with Local Government in Victoria since 2000. The workshop will introduce the context and outline the processes required for procurement and sustainability staff to optimise the benefits of green purchasing in line with their organisation’s goals. To register, visit www.ecobuy.org.au, or phone (03) 9349 0444.

Upcoming Events

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<td>General Management Committee Meeting, Launceston</td>
<td>23 September</td>
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<tr>
<td>Planning Course for Elected Members, Hobart</td>
<td>16 October &amp; 20 November</td>
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