President’s Message

The forthcoming Federal Election, the recent pulp mill decision, the Myer fire, and numerous hospital and health crises, are some of the many issues currently grabbing media headlines. With so much going on, it is unlikely that the Local Government Elections will receive the level of media coverage they deserve. Whilst this scenario is not ideal, the lack of attention will enable councils to more effectively focus on the day-to-day business of providing essential services and addressing community needs, without all the political grandstanding.

In the lead-up to the Local Government Elections, it is encouraging to see such a healthy number of candidates stepping forward for the job of providing community leadership. It is also heartening to read a number of good news stories that demonstrate council commitment to providing greater opportunities and experiences for residents and visitors.

However, there are numerous examples of local councils working positively and proactively for their respective communities. On a daily basis, councils are involved in thousands of interactions and are required to make decisions about a variety of issues, which are often quite complex. At times, newspaper articles reflect dissatisfaction or angst by some members of the community but, generally, they also include a positive comment by council representatives suggesting an action plan or possible way forward. It is important that issues are investigated and discussed before possible solutions can be determined and implemented.

Earlier this week, the winners of the Medibank Private Active Towns Awards were announced. I would like to congratulate the Brighton community as the overall winner for the Brighton Alive project and also the Hobart and Launceston City Councils on their success. This is also an opportune time to wish Circular Head, Flinders, Hobart City, Huon Valley and Launceston City Councils every success for 23 October, when the National Awards for Local Government will be announced. Whilst there are twenty-five councils nominated from across all states and territories, I am certain that the Tasmanian entries will be considered favourably.

In closing, I would like to wish all candidates in the upcoming Local Government Elections the best of luck. May your residents choose wisely!

Brighton Wins Active Towns Award

The community of Brighton has been announced as the overall winner of the 2007 Medibank Private Active Towns Awards. The awards recognise schools and communities that play a valuable role in developing and maintaining healthy communities. Brighton will receive $10,000 in prize money for its successful Brighton Alive project, which encompasses a range of physical activity events. Launceston received the Innovation Award for its Active City Park program and also shares the City Award category with Hobart’s Bushland Trails project. For full details, visit www.getmoving.tas.gov.au.

Sorell Farewells General Manager

Graeme Sundstrom has resigned as General Manager for Sorell Council. During his three and a half years of service, Graeme brought high-level skills to the organisation and significantly assisted in mapping out a future strategy for the district. Graeme will take up a senior position with Quadrant Superannuation and will be sorely missed by Council colleagues and associates. The position will be advertised in the near future.

New General Manager for West Coast

From 22 October, Peter Harder will commence as the new General Manager for the West Coast Council. Mr Harder brings extensive experience in business systems, information technology and maintenance, and previously held the State Transport Manager position for De Bruyns’ Transport.

2007 Local Government National Human Resources Conference

Australia’s premier professional development event for human resource professionals in Local Government will be held on the Gold Coast from 14-16 November. Under the ‘Hot Issues in HR’ theme, the conference promises an exciting line-up of speakers, workshops and activities. Don’t miss this exciting opportunity to learn, network, share ideas and to up-skill. Register today at www.lgaq.asn.au.

Planning for Peak Oil

How close are we to the peak in world oil production? What are the likely impacts globally and for Tasmania? What should we be doing? How can your organisation plan? These are just some of the questions that will be answered in Phil Hart’s workshop, Planning for Peak Oil, to be held on 22 October in Hobart. Cost is $22 for government and business sector, and $11.00 for NGOs and community organisations. For a copy of the registration form, go to www.sustainablelivingtasmania.org.au.
Drought Assistance Information Sessions
The Federal Government recently announced a range of drought assistance measures to help farmers and small businesses in Tasmania. To enable farming communities to better understand what assistance they may be entitled to, Centrelink will be hosting information sessions around the state from 22 - 31 October at Smithton, Wynyard, Huonville, Sorell, New Norfolk, Ulverstone, St Marys, Deloraine, Westbury, Swansea and Scottsdale. For further details, please contact Janine Walker on 6331 2598.

Working Safe Conference and Trade Show
Council representatives with an interest in OHS issues, rehabilitation and workers’ compensation are invited to attend the TCCI’s 2007 Working Safe Conference and Trade Show, to be held on 24 October at Wrest Point. Cost is $190.00. For a copy of the registration form, go to www.tcci.com.au.

Funding Available for New Weed Control Equipment
Councils, landcare groups, private land managers and government across the southern region are currently being targeted with $90,000 of new funding to enhance their weed management capabilities. The Southern Tasmanian Weed Strategy will invest in equipment and initiatives including improved weed mapping and mapping equipment, soil hygiene and wash down equipment, improved weed management planning and on-ground weed control equipment. Applications for funding are due by 5 November. A submission form can be downloaded from www.stca.tas.gov.au, or phone 6270 2242.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has launched a new international guide for urban planners on how to prepare for an ageing population, using research undertaken across 33 cities in 22 countries. The guide identifies the key physical, social and service needs of the ageing population in urban centres and contains a checklist of features that urban planners can use to help plan communities that cater for the requirements of an ageing population. To view a copy of the WHO’s Global age-friendly cities: a guide, visit www.who.int/mediacentre/news/releases/2007/pr53/en/index.html.

On-Ground Support for Tasmanian Landcare Projects
Conservation Volunteers Australia (CVA) and the National Landcare Programme have developed a national partnership to provide on-ground practical support for Landcare activities. Through the Regional Delivery Support Program, CVA is providing practical, on-ground assistance to accelerate the delivery of landcare projects. 50 days (10 weeks) of free CVA support are available to groups, individuals and organisations in Tasmania for Landcare activities. Expressions of Interest are due by the 26 October. For more information, go to www.conservationvolunteers.com.au.

Grants Available for National Youth Week Events
Councils and non-government organisations wishing to organise events for next year’s National Youth Week celebrations are invited to apply for State Government funding. A total of $66,000 funding is available to support events being held during the week from 5-13 April to give young Tasmanians the opportunity to try new activities, be entertained, share ideas and act on issues that affect their lives. Applications close on 31 October. For details, visit www.dpac.tas.gov.au, or call the Office of Children and Youth Affairs on 6233 7945.

Project Management Training - Half Day
LG Performance will be conducting a half-day training course in Hobart (17 Oct.), Launceston (13 Nov.) and Burnie (14 Nov.), introducing participants to the principles of project management and the tools to design and manage them. Anticipate activities and manage resources to achieve objectives, understand projects in an operational environment, and arrange activities into a project plan. Cost is $390.00 + GST. To reserve your space, phone Deidre Parker on 6236 9055.

Water Under Pressure
The annual IPWEA/TAMS Conference will be held at the Launceston Country Club from 9-10 November. The conference, themed Water Under Pressure, will feature keynote speakers on the topics of Water authorities under pressure, and Climate change and pressure on water storage and operation. The conference will also address flood plain issues, flood levee protection systems and a summary of the findings of the review into water and sewer operations and how best to manage these resources in the future. For further details, please contact Harry Galea on 6323 3349 or 0400 059 897, or email Harry.Galea@launceston.tas.gov.au.

Need Staff?
Did you know that there is help for employers to access recruitment services, people returning to work, support and subsidies? Call the Australian Government’s Employer Hotline on 13 17 15 to find out more.

Upcoming Events
- General Management Committee Meeting, Hobart: 26 October
- General Meeting, Launceston: 14 November
- Mayors’ Workshop: 15 November
- General Management Committee Meeting: 12 December