President's Message
All elected members should have received a program outlining the 95th LGAT Conference to be held in Hobart towards the end of May.

The Art of Survival is indeed an apt theme for the conference as every day elected members and council staff are responding flexibly, creatively, and at times, instinctively to a myriad of demands and issues involving our residents and community groups.

As Local Government does not have constitutional recognition the “art of survival” is possibly more relevant to our sector than the other spheres of government. Whilst at State and Federal levels there appears to be a greater importance of preservation or survival strategy for the self (individual / party), at our level of government, elected members and council staff are generally more concerned about pursuing ways for community progress and ultimately Council survival.

On a somewhat different subject, I would encourage all councils to consider forwarding articles of interest to our own LGAT publications and national magazines, newsletters etc. I believe that as a sector, Local Government in Tasmania generally does not market itself very well. I am aware of many examples of innovation and practical strategies utilized in our councils to solve or progress issues and yet we tend not to forward that information to the rest of Australia.

Earlier this week the Premiers Local Government Council (PLGC) met in Launceston. The Council meets three times a year and comprises representatives of State Government, GMC and council officers. A range of issues and topics were discussed and GMC members would be able to provide you with verbal feedback about the meeting. One of the most important outcomes of the meeting was the Premier’s commitment to a special meeting of the PLGC to discuss with the Treasurer the water and sewerage issue. The Premier is now very aware of the grave concerns that Local Government has with the process. He acknowledged the importance of these assets to our communities and the significance of the issue to the ongoing sustainability of councils.

Council Cost Index
LGAT has released its second council cost index to assist councils with their rate setting deliberations.

The index proposes that the average movement in costs for the average council in Tasmania would be in the vicinity of 4.15%, up from the last year’s council cost index of 3.95%. This slight increase is influenced mainly by the increase in construction costs over the past 12 months. For further information phone LGAT on 6233 5966.

2007 LG Conference
Don’t miss the chance to register your attendance at the 2007 Local Government Conference. Speakers include Professor Ian Lowe on climate change, Pamille Berg on developing effective public art policy, Graeme Orr on leadership and community engagement, Renata Sheehan on skills shortages and Antarctic adventurer, Peter Bland.

A highlight of the event will be the Civic Mutual Plus Survivors Dinner at the City Hall on 31 May, featuring the announcement of the winners of the 2007 Local Government Awards for Excellence and performances by Taiko Drum, Kevin Kopfstein and Beluga.

For more information or to register your attendance, download a copy of the Conference Program and Registration Form from the LGAT website at http://www.lgat.tas.gov.au/site/page.cfm?u=209. Please register by 14 May.

Premier Commits to Water and Sewerage Consultation
The Premier has made a commitment to the PLGC that as soon as the issue of water and sewerage has been discussed at Cabinet a special meeting of the PLGC will be convened to consider the matter.

The commitment follows a strong position being put by the President on the dissatisfaction of Local Government with the process to date and the lack of communication. Local Government’s strong opposition to a State owned entity controlling water and sewerage was made clear to the Premier together with the intention to take up the matter with the Australian Government.

2007 National General Assembly of Local Government
The National General Assembly of Local Government will this year be held in the Northern Territory from 26-29 November. The theme for the conference is A Climate for Change and will explore physical climate, financial climate and political climate.

Councils are encouraged to submit motions on issues of national significance for debate. Notices of Motion should be submitted via email to alga@alga.asn.au by Friday 10 August 2007.

Councils on Show!, introduced at the 2006 event, will once again be a feature in the program. ALGA invites councils to submit DVD presentations of five minutes maximum showcasing Local Government innovation across Australia. Preference for selection will be given to those DVDs which fit the 2007 theme. Applications should be submitted by Friday 14 September 2007. For further information on the National General Assembly visit http://nga.alga.asn.au/.
Promoting Tasmania’s Local Government Sector

LGAT’s quarterly magazine LGAT News is distributed extensively throughout the Local Government sector in Tasmania and is a means for Tasmanian councils to share information within the sector. LGAT News is currently seeking editorial for its July 2007 issue. To make a submission e-mail Stephanie.Watson@lgat.tas.gov.au. A number of other publications reach the Local Government sector at a national level. In an effort to promote the positive work of Tasmanian councils, it may be of interest to your council to submit editorial to the following publications:

- ALGA News – amanda.lynch@alga.asn.au
- LG Focus – info@lgfocus.com.au
- Councillor – ben.hutchinson@halledit.com.au
- LG News – ben.hutchinson@halledit.com.au
- Council Leader – councilleader@lqaq.asn.au
- LG Manager Magazine – publisher@indigoarch.com.au
- Government News – adam@intermedia.com

Development of Tasmanian Waste Strategy: Consultation Workshop

The State Government has engaged Victorian-based consultancy Blue Environment to develop a draft Tasmanian Waste Strategy. As a key stakeholder in this process Local Government views are important and Councils are invited to participate in a consultation workshop to be held on 22 May 2007 between 2-4pm at the Tailrace Centre, 1 Waterfront Drive, Riverside. Please RSVP to Christine Wardle of Blue Environment on 03 9880 7080 or mobile 0408 540 980 or email christine.wardle@blueenvironment.com.au.

Legislation Committee Update

The Legislation Committee met on Friday 20 April for the second of its quarterly meetings for 2007. The Committee discussed a range of bills in progress including the Local Government Act, the review of the Land Use and Planning Approvals Act and Better Planning Outcomes. Steven Wait from the Environment Division attended the meeting to discuss with members the final draft of the Environmental Management and Pollution Control [Amendment] Act 2007. Steven is happy to meet with councils to discuss the proposed Act and can be contacted on 6233 6430. For further information on the Legislation Committee refer to the Association’s website at www.lgat.tas.gov.au.

Council Careers Presentation

As a part of the Council Careers project, the Association has developed a PowerPoint that may be useful for councils to use in school presentations. The Association encourages council engagement with schools as an approach to tackle the skills shortage. The presentation will be available early next week on the Council Careers website at www.CouncilCareers.tas.gov.au. For further advice on the Council Careers project contact the Association on 6233 5960.

Training in Local Government

The Office of Post Compulsory Education and Training has developed an information kit for Local Government on the training system in Tasmania. The kit can be accessed as of early next week from the new training section on the LGAT website at www.lgat.tas.gov.au. Also available under the new training section will be a training plan developed by LGAT that aims to assist councils with the training and development of trainees.

Black Spot Funding Announced

The State Government has announced 34 projects across the state that will benefit from Black Spot Program funding. For further information refer to http://www.media.tas.gov.au/release.php?id=20746.

Heart Foundation and Kellogg Reward Local Governments for Heart Health Initiatives

Entries to the Heart Foundation Kellogg Local Government Awards are now open. The Heart Foundation and Kellogg are providing $35,000 in recognition awards to reward initiatives that help create healthy communities. Entries close Friday 8 June 2007. For further information visit www.heartfoundation.com.au/lga.

Know Your Census – Information Sessions

The ABS Tasmanian regional office, in conjunction with the Training Consortium is offering two hour information sessions on the release of products and services for Census 2006. For further information visit www.abs.gov.au.

How to Reduce Public Lighting Costs

A new guide has been released for the nation’s Local Government sector on how to improve the energy efficiency of public lighting on minor roads. The guide is available to download from the Australian Greenhouse Office website http://www.greenhouse.gov.au/local/publiclighting/index.html.

Asset Owners Seminar - The Cost of Corrosion: Preventative Vs Reactive

The Australasian Corrosion Association Tasmania Branch will be holding a seminar with the theme “The Cost of Corrosion: Preventative Vs Reactive”. The seminar will be held on 16 May 2007, at Zepps Meeting Rooms in Campbell Town. For further information contact Dean Wall at dean.wall@orica.com.

Project Management Workshop

High Performance Management is offering a half day project management workshop to be held in Launceston on 18 June from 8.45-12.30. Registrations close 10 May. Contact Deidre Parker on 6236 9055 or refer to www.highperftraining.com.au for further information.

Upcoming Events

- Annual General Meeting/General Meeting
- LGAT Conference