

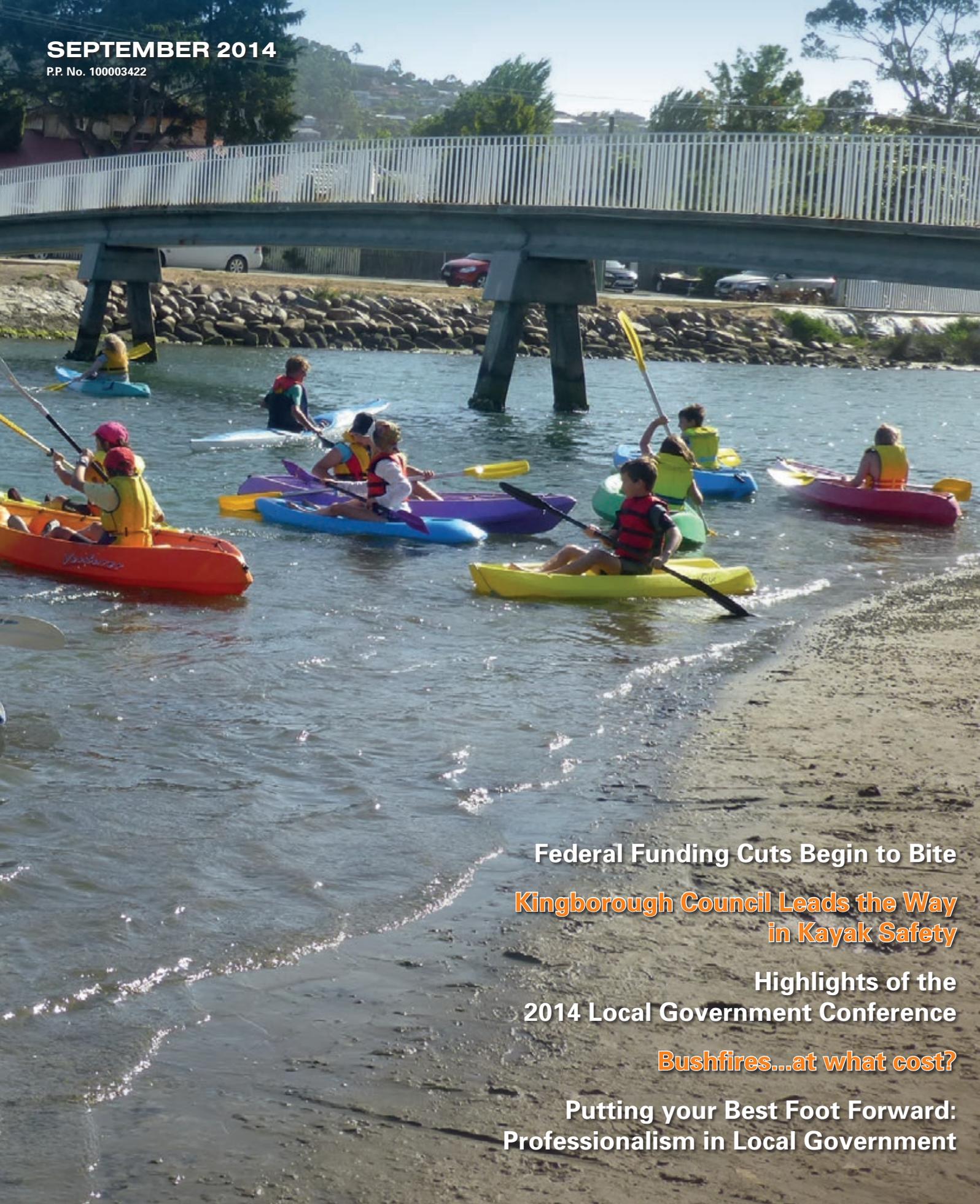
# LGAT

Local Government Association Tasmania

# NEWS

SEPTEMBER 2014

P.P. No. 100003422



Federal Funding Cuts Begin to Bite

**Kingborough Council Leads the Way  
in Kayak Safety**

Highlights of the  
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**Bushfires...at what cost?**

Putting your Best Foot Forward:  
Professionalism in Local Government



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# inside this issue



13



18



31



41

President's Report .....	2
Chief Executive Officer's Report .....	3
Policy Perspectives.....	4
Faces of Local Government.....	6
News and Reviews.....	10
People and Performance .....	29
Health and Wellbeing .....	31
Environment .....	36
Business and Finance.....	40
Roads and Engineering.....	46

**COVER PHOTO:** Participants enjoying the highly successful Paddle Safe pilot program at Browns River, Kingston.

Photography by Melissa Staples



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# Education Ambassadors Program to Inspire Future Generations



BARRY EASTHER OAM, PRESIDENT  
Local Government Association of Tasmania

I have recently had the privilege of meeting with Professors Eleanor Ramsay and Michael Rowan as they travel the State encouraging mayors and other community leaders to become Education Ambassadors. Eleanor and Rowan moved to Tasmania some years ago and were immediately surprised and concerned that so few young Tasmanians stayed at school until they completed Year 12, and were puzzled by the explanation that education beyond Year 10 is not valued in many Tasmanian communities. Whether this is a myth or a reality, it does put Tasmania out of step – not just with the rest of Australia but with the rest of the world.

Eleanor and Michael see the need for this view to be challenged and changed if Tasmanians are to have the chance of living exciting and rewarding lives in the twenty-first century, and if Tasmania is to fulfil its very special potential. The project, Ambassadors for Education in Tasmania, has been developed in discussion with a wide range of Tasmanians who care about the future of our State and of our young people in particular. Mayor Graham Bury is a keen advocate for this program and I thank Graham for initially bringing it to the attention of Local Government.

The aim of the project is to encourage mayors and other community leaders, sporting identities, leading business people, trade union leaders, in fact anyone who can use their voice to change the community conversation about education. The accumulated impact of the voices of the Education Ambassadors all over Tasmania, who will talk up education instead of talking it down whenever the occasion arises, will have a significant influence within the education system. Ambassadors will encourage young people to dream big and stay at school to get the skills and knowledge they need to realise their dreams.

I challenge all elected members to get on board with this extremely worthwhile program and become an Education Ambassador. Together we will change the community conversation about education whenever it underestimates the capacities of our young people and the importance of all young Tasmanians having a genuine opportunity to complete a full twelve years of schooling. Further information on the program can be found at <http://educationambassadors.org.au>.

As I write these few words, I am very conscious of the fact that my term as President of the Association is drawing to a close, in fact my days as an elected member are numbered! It is difficult for me to put into words just how much I have enjoyed and appreciated the privilege of representing the West Tamar and Tasmanian communities over the years since my election in March 1983. It doesn't seem all that long ago and as I look back, I am staggered by the many opportunities and experiences afforded me during those years. It has truly been exceptional.

Perhaps the only disappointment I have had during my time as President has been councils withdrawing and/or giving notice of their intention to withdraw from their membership of the Association. Thankfully, one of the councils has returned and it would be to my absolute delight for the others to seriously reconsider their position. The Association has and continues to offer a wide range of support to the sector and it is so important to be in a position to speak with one united voice. My plea, please ensure that the Association is representative of all 29 councils sooner rather than later.

I know that I have made the right decision not to contest the October 2014 Local Government Election and I will be watching the results with a great deal of interest. It will be quite a change not to have that anxious feeling as the votes are being counted and posted online. Without a doubt, I will continue to take a keen interest in the sphere of government that has been so good to me.



Photo courtesy of Hobart College



# ELECTION TIME

## IS HERE AGAIN

ALLAN GARCIA, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, Local Government Association of Tasmania

**They don't come as often as Christmas and unfortunately, not everybody gets the present they want, however elections are a big deal and provide the community with an opportunity to express their preferences.**

The all in-all out scenario means that every seat in every council is up for grabs. All councils and all incumbents will be under scrutiny and new hopefuls will be keen to make their pitch. On top of that, we have the circumstance where the qualification period for mayor and deputy mayor has been scrapped, opening up the field to all-comers. Yes, the October elections are brewing as the perfect storm.

Thankfully we have set aside the debate on amalgamations and councils are focusing on their ongoing sustainability, and achieving improved outcomes for their communities. While current councils have plans, strategies and visions, a brand new council in each municipality will provide a unique opportunity to set new directions. This isn't a matter of throwing the baby out with the bath water but will allow all councillors to establish a plan and strategy for the ensuing four years.

A big challenge for voters will be deciding who to vote for. It is anticipated that there will be record numbers of candidates and, with reductions in councillor numbers across several councils, the contest will be on in earnest. Many candidates will have the advantage of incumbency, while others will highlight that as a reason for change. We will witness some fantastic visions, there will be single issues that people will seek to resolve, agendas to set and scores to be settled.

The important thing for candidates to understand when attending their first council meeting is that their critical task is to work with the other elected members as a team to achieve the best possible outcomes. This will require some compromise, presenting sound and logical arguments, working with others to fashion common goals, and being patient and strategic in progressing particular matters.

There will also be the challenge of inducting and bringing new members up to speed with their responsibilities and the knowledge required to undertake their role. The Association will be very active in the induction and training space, and councils are strongly urged to encourage new members to undertake as much training as possible.

The amendment to allow for the removal of the twelve-month qualification period for mayor and deputy mayor has passed through the Lower House and is currently awaiting debate in the Upper House. While not all councils agreed, the matter was comfortably supported by the membership at the General Meeting in July. The overwhelming feeling was that, while a twelve-month period may have been appropriate under a two-yearly election process, the qualification period effectively becomes a four-year apprenticeship under the all in-all out scenario. Time will tell as to whether the community considers that putting someone into the top job straight away is appropriate.

We also have an election process in place for the President of the Association. Early indications are that there are a number of potential candidates from around the State. As the CEO of the Association, I of course wish all candidates well.

This leads me to the retiring President, Mayor Barry Easter, who has been a wonderful leader and voice for Local Government over the past five years. His easy-going and friendly nature has endeared him to politicians at the Federal and State level. He is admired by his interstate colleagues and has the respect of the Association's membership and staff. On behalf of all involved at and with the Association, I wish Barry all the best for his retirement and trust that his future exploits provide him with as much pleasure as the past few decades in Local Government have delivered.





# PUTTING YOUR BEST FOOT FORWARD

## PROFESSIONALISM IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

DR KATRENA STEPHENSON, POLICY DIRECTOR  
Local Government Association of Tasmania

***Professionals aspire to high ideals: altruism; honour and integrity; respect; excellence and scholarship; caring, compassion, communication; leadership; responsibility and accountability<sup>1</sup>.***

The Tasmanian Local Government sector is gearing up for the October elections. In considering how we support voters, candidates and newly elected councillors, there is a recurring theme of professionalism. Whether you work for a council, are elected to a council, or hope to be elected to a council; the way you present yourself and the way you project professionalism has an impact on both personal and organisational success.

The requirements of councils are diverse and complex. Local governments must provide effective municipal governance, community and democratic leadership, and efficient services. They must empower communities; provide strategic leadership; be effective regulators and responsible finance managers. They must shape the economic and physical development of communities; foster inclusive communities and think long-term<sup>2</sup>. It's a big task which provides the imperative for professionalism.

Simply put, professionalism relates to the way we conduct ourselves. It is the skill, good judgement and polite behaviour expected from people as they carry out their work<sup>3</sup>. Being professional means much more than wearing a coat and tie, or possessing the title of Councillor. Professionalism also has to do with how you conduct yourself during council meetings, public events and within the community generally.

Key characteristics of professionalism<sup>4</sup> might include:

- Maintaining a neat appearance.
- Showing confidence but not cockiness – be polite and well-spoken when interacting with other councillors, council staff, members of the local and wider communities. Keep your calm, even during tense situations.
- Punctuality and reliability; respond to people promptly and deal with issues within any time frames suggested.
- Acting ethically; know the *Local Government Act*, meeting procedures and your Council's Code of Conduct well and adhere to those at all times. Declare conflicts of interest.
- Accepting accountability; if you make a mistake, own up to it and try to fix it if possible. Take responsibility and work to resolve the issue.

- Having a strong work ethic; prepare for meetings and workshops, and attend any relevant seminars and events designed to provide further education for councillors.
- Communicating clearly. Be sure not to dominate the conversation and listen intently to the other party. If you are treated in a belligerent manner, you should not resort to the same type of behaviour. Always be mindful of how your words will be quoted and accepted by the wider community, and be very clear to differentiate when expressing a personal opinion versus talking on behalf of Council.
- Be true to your word. Honour your commitments. Breaking promises breaks trust.

There can be differences of opinion between Councillors and Local Government staff but both are required to work professionally to deliver the best outcomes for communities. Good working relationships between elected members and officers are prerequisites to a highly functioning council. Good working relationships between elected members and officers can be strengthened by: increasing the dialogue about working styles; policy-makers setting clear, measurable and time-sensitive goals for the organisation; the genuine commitment of all parties to making the relationship work; developing and communicating a common vision, goals and aspirations; being respectful of other opinions; developing a true belief in the value of democracy; and by trusting that council employees are dedicated to serving their communities<sup>5</sup>.

Elected officials and senior managers in Tasmanian Local Government tend to be publicly known. In the evolving context that is Local Government, there are increasing demands on their time, new skills which need to be developed and more people watching them closely. At LGAT, we can assist with professional development, time-saving sharing of resources, or whole-of-sector projects and advocacy but, in the end, the main question the public will ask is "have they worked professionally?" However, I think the important question is the one we ask ourselves, "Have I been/am I professional in all that I do?"

<sup>1</sup> Carter, L. and Wilson, M. (2006). "Measuring Professionalism of Police Officers", *The Police Chief*, vol. 73, no. 8.

<sup>2</sup> Ajayi O (2011), *Professionalising Local Government Leadership: A Foundational Imperative*, <http://www.lgma.org.au/downloads/File/Ajayi%20-%20Professionalising%20Local%20Government%20-%20Issue%201.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/professionalism> 21/08/2014

<sup>4</sup> 10 Characteristics of Professionalism, by Chris Joseph, Demand Media

<sup>5</sup> C. Fehrenbach, in collaboration with R. Burkholder, R. Casey, C. Smeltzer (no date), *Relationships among Mayors, Governing Bodies, Managers/Administrators, Attorneys, Clerks and Professional Staff*, [http://www.njslom.org/toolbox\\_relationships.html](http://www.njslom.org/toolbox_relationships.html).



## A CAREER IN

# Speed Dating

SCOTT BLACKLOW, CAREERS DEVELOPMENT OFFICER  
Local Government Association of Tasmania

**Kingborough and Huon Valley Councils this year joined forces with Colony 47 and the Local Government Association of Tasmania (LGAT) to help inspire students from St James Catholic College with an unusual careers event.**

A fast-paced, 'speed date' style careers event was conducted. The advantages of this style of event over traditional work experience includes reduced resource requirements of councils and a greater breadth of coverage of council functions. Students select the careers they are interested in, then ask staff working in those roles what they do and how they got their jobs.

The human resource managers from the councils (Pene Hughes from Kingborough and Mark Stanton from Huon Valley) worked with Vija Hughes of Colony 47 and Cecily Burnett of St James Catholic College to organise some hands-on experience. Students could visit Kingborough's sports centre, childcare, youth services, engineering, environmental services, administration and customer services in operation. Scenarios included taking evidence and compliance, customer services and handling complaints.

A *Work Inspiration* model was introduced to Australia by The Smith Family Foundation, in a program funded by the previous Commonwealth Government. Southern Midlands Council participated in a national pilot of the full *Work Inspiration* model in 2013. A video of this event can be viewed on LGAT's website at [www.thinkbigworklocal.com.au](http://www.thinkbigworklocal.com.au).

The Kingborough event was a modified version of the *Work Inspiration* model, being shorter and snappier. Councils and students alike appear to prefer these shorter duration, structured, higher intensity events.

**If you are inspired to set up a careers event in your region, please email Scott Blacklow at [Scott.Blacklow@lgat.tas.gov.au](mailto:Scott.Blacklow@lgat.tas.gov.au), or call (03) 6233 5967. LGAT can also provide assistance in other areas of careers promotions, training and workforce development initiatives.**



*Kingborough Compliance Officer, Steven Cooke interviews the owner of Emily the dog, demonstrating formal legal complaint investigation techniques to students*



*Hobart City's first female Lord Mayor,  
Doone Kennedy AO*

Photo courtesy of Hobart City Council

## Vale Doone Kennedy AO

Hobart City's first female Lord Mayor, Mrs Doone Kennedy AO passed away on 30 August 2014 at the age of 87. Mrs Kennedy served on Hobart City Council from 1982-1999 and as Lord Mayor from 1986-1996.

After being elected to Council, Doone Kennedy's first foray into the public arena came about when she took up the Chairmanship of a Council Sub-Committee to run the garden competition to brighten the city. It was during this period that she first considered the possibility of taking on the role of Lord Mayor. She always thought that she could give special leadership to the City from a woman's perspective.

Mrs Kennedy worked tirelessly for the City of Hobart and championed a number of significant events during this time. Among them was overseeing the construction of the Hobart Aquatic Centre on the Queen's Domain as a new, world class facility and, not wanting to burden the ratepayers with the cost of refurbishing the Town Hall chandeliers, she ran an appeal to raise the money for the repairs, then successfully sought funding for the bud lights in the Plane trees at Salamanca Place.

In the publication, *Growing with Strength, A History of the Hobart City Council 1846-2000*, Doone Kennedy is described as "down-to-earth and sensible, with a flair for the right words on the right occasion, and an excellent understanding of people". She was known for her willingness to help ratepayers with problems; she was popular and successful socially, and a good public face for Hobart.

The Local Government Association of Tasmania wishes to convey our sincere condolences to Mrs Kennedy's family at this sad time.

## Life Membership for Barry Easter OAM

Mayor Barry Easter OAM of West Tamar Council was bestowed the honour of Life Membership of the Local Government Association at the Local Government Conference Dinner, held on 24 July.

In 1983, Barry was elected as a Councillor to the Beaconsfield Council where he served as Warden from 1990-1993, and as Mayor of West Tamar Council from 2003-2004 when Council was renamed. Barry was re-elected as Mayor in 2000 and has served continuously in this role over the last 14 years.

Notable achievements include: the development of the Windsor Park Community Precinct; the structural plan for the future development of Legana and the Beaconsfield Heritage Centre; leading the Beaconsfield community through the mine disaster in 2006; and as LGAT President, Barry finalised the first tranche of water and sewerage reform, and oversaw the consolidation of the regional bodies into a single entity in the second tranche.

Barry has been an active member of Rotary since 1976, a Board Member with Beaconsfield Park since 1985, a member of the Premier's Local Government Council since 2004, a member of LGAT's General Management Committee since 2004 and President since 2009, a



*Retiring LGAT President,  
Mayor Barry Easter OAM*

Director of the Australian Local Government Association since 2006, and a Board Member of the Northern Tasmanian Development Association since 2008. In 2000, Barry was awarded the Centenary Medal for service to the community, and a Medal of the Order of Australia in the General Division in 2009.

Barry's presence will be missed by all at LGAT and by his peers. We wish Barry and his wife, Jan every happiness for their retirement.

# Mayor Gaffney Recognised for Exemplary Service to Local Government

An unsuspecting Mayor Mike Gaffney MLC was presented with a Councillor Exemplary Service Award, on 24 July, by LGAT President, Mayor Barry Easther.

Mike commenced with Local Government as a Councillor in 1994, serving as Deputy Mayor from 1995-2000, and as Mayor from 2003 until the present day. Using his teaching background to forge closer links between Council, local schools and students, he was instrumental in instigating extensive community consultation regarding the educational needs of the community and in the establishment of a primary school at Port Sorell.

Since 2008, Mike has organised the annual Latrobe Community Christmas Carols. He is also a champion of feral cat management and instigated the Latrobe Community Cemetery Committee which organises regular working bees. Early in 2013, he introduced a successful seat dedication concept to Council.

Major issues and initiatives in which Mike has been involved include: the closure of the Wesley Vale Paper Mill in 2010; fighting to keep the Mersey Community Hospital

open when its future faced uncertainly; and initiating the grant for which Council was successful in obtaining \$250,000 to upgrade Latrobe's streetscape, including improvements to Station Square and an additional public toilet facility.

Mike is an Honorary Rotarian, an Ambassador for White Ribbon, he organises the annual Latrobe Masters Basketball Tournament, and is an Ambassador for the Premier's Physical Activity Council. He also served three years as LGAT President from 2006-2009. Mike will be relinquishing his role on Council in October to continue his pursuits with the Legislative Council and we wish him every success.



*Councillor Exemplary Service Award recipient, Mayor Mike Gaffney MLC*

# Gerald Monson Rewarded for Long Service

Tasmanian Local Government's longest-serving General Manager, Gerald Monson, was the recipient of a LGAT Long Service Award on 24 July.

Gerald commenced in Local Government in 1973 as an Administration Officer with the Municipality of Burnie. From 1978 to 1987, he was the Deputy Council Clerk of the Municipality of Scottsdale and Council Clerk with the Municipality of Evandale from 1987-1993.

Following the council amalgamations in 1993, Gerald became General Manager of the newly-formed Northern Midlands Council where he served until 2007. He then became General Manager of the Latrobe Council where he has served till this present day, and also as General Manager of the Kentish Council since 2010, in a resource-sharing capacity between the two councils.

Some of Gerald's many achievements include:

- Being instrumental in the construction of the \$9.5 million dollar, treated water scheme to supply the Northern townships of Longford, Perth and Evandale;
- Securing Commonwealth and State Government funding for the \$4.5 million Longford Flood Levee Project;



*(L-R) Latrobe and Kentish Council General Manager, Gerald Monson pictured with LGAT President, Mayor Barry Easther at the awards presentation*

- Working with the Elizabeth and Macquarie Water Committees to establish a Water Trust to manage the water flows from Lake Leake and Tooms Lake;
- Successfully managing the amalgamation of the Evandale, Longford, Campbell Town, Ross and part of Fingal Municipalities in 1993;
- Being instrumental in the formation of the Heritage Highway Tourism Region Association and a key driver for the Port Sorell Strategic Plan project; and
- Being a visionary behind the Kentish Health Care Centre.

Gerald is a Fellow of Local Government Managers Australia, having served as State President from 1996-1998, and was a National Board Member until 2000.



# Message from the MINISTER

*Hon Peter Gutwein MP, Minister for Planning and Local Government*

Tasmania has a rather unique situation where, unlike most other states, we spend more time working together for the local community than we do arguing against each other. It's important to foster a cooperative approach to both the challenges and opportunities that confront us. Regardless of our own individual political views, I believe that we all want to see our communities prosper and grow. We want to see strong communities working together for the benefit of all, and families, businesses and individuals in our communities provided with the opportunities and services they need. To achieve that, we need strong local leadership and the State Government is prepared to work shoulder-to-shoulder with Local Government to provide that leadership.

One of the most important working relationships that the State Government and Local Government can have is in the area of regional economic development. While investment attraction, economic growth and job creation are largely State Government responsibilities, it will only be through strong relationships and partnerships with Local Government that we will be able to capture the opportunities.

We need to work together to provide the right environment for investment, development, population growth and job creation to occur. As the Minister for Planning and Local Government, I am advancing planning

reform to encourage investment, development and jobs growth. We are committed to implementing a single, statewide planning scheme and I need the help of Local Government to deliver that policy.

I will not be ripping up the good work that Local Government has already done. I want to build on what has been done and, in partnership, deliver a planning system that meets the needs of your municipalities and sends a clear message that the State is open for business.

Another issue I want to discuss is the review of councillor allowances. As Treasurer, I have frozen the salaries of State MPs and senior public servants, and have proposed a broader pay pause for all public servants. Some may say this review of allowances is long overdue but, given the State's financial situation, I think it is incumbent on all elected leaders to shoulder some of the burden and I would encourage you to consider a pay pause as well. It will send the right message to our community if we are all pulling our weight to deal with difficult times.

Over the coming years, I hope that we can have a fruitful and successful working relationship. I encourage you to let me know what you think and am always prepared to be convinced by reasonable and well-thought out arguments. I am excited by the potential and the opportunities that we have, and that we can capitalise on if we work together.

## New General Manager for George Town

George Town Council has a new General Manager, Andrew Macnish, who recently moved to Tasmania from Western Australia to take up the position.

Andrew comes to George Town with a solid background in Local Government including twelve years' experience as CEO for the Shires of Busselton and Bridgetown, and having successfully managed his own business interests, as well as providing consulting advice within the Local Government sector.

With five tertiary qualifications relating to Local Government and having previously managed nearly 300 employees, Andrew has much to offer in his new position. His involvement in tourism and district promotion, history and streetscape, coastal management, asset management and organisation development all bode well for his contribution to his new community. Andrew's understanding of sustainability principles and analytical work on reform/amalgamation proposals in Western Australia will serve Council well to strategically position George Town's future.

Andrew has also had an impressive sporting career, being a former Australian Rules footballer with the West Coast Eagles and Geelong, and is now a Life Member of Western Australia's Subiaco Football Club.



*Newly appointed  
General Manager for  
George Town Council,  
Andrew Macnish*

# Accolades for Dedicated Break O'Day Councillors

With a combined total of 29 years' experience and tireless service to the Break O'Day Council and community, Clr Margaret Osborne OAM and Clr John McGiveron were each presented Local Government Service Awards on 23 June by Local Government Association of Tasmania President, Mayor Barry Easter.

Clr Osborne has served on Break O'Day Council since 1999. During this time, she has filled the role of Deputy Mayor for eleven consecutive years (2000 – 2011) and has successfully and graciously undertaken the role of Acting Mayor when required.

Clr McGiveron has served on Break O'Day Council since 2000. One of his main passions in recent years has been as Chair of the Break O'Day Council Georges Bay Barway Committee, since its inception in 2006. With John at the helm, the Committee has been the driving force in partnership with MAST, lobbying Governments to obtain financial assistance to undertake necessary works to keep the barway and Pelican Point open for a safe and reliable passage into St Helens.

As active members of the Break O'Day community, both councillors are involved in various organisations and groups including Lions Clubs, St Helens and Districts Chamber of Commerce and Tourism, and sporting clubs. They have a genuine interest in the success



*(L-R) LGAT President, Mayor Barry Easter, former Break O'Day Council Mayor, Sarah Schmerl, and Clr Margaret Osborne and Clr John McGiveron with their Local Government Service Awards*

and sustainability of all community groups, and attend as many events, meetings and functions that they can to show their support. Their dedication and collective contributions have helped to make the community what it is today.



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# STATE OF THE REGIONS REPORT IDENTIFIES **Widening** Gap

**A widening gap between the prosperity of Australia's regions, the need for strategic infrastructure investment and an uncertain outlook for youth employment in many regions are among the key findings of the 2014-15 State of the Regions Report, *Regional Development in a Globalised Economy*.**

The report, produced by National Economics for the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA), provides a longitudinal study into the prospects of Australia's regions and their development.

This year's report highlights the trend of a widening gap between regions that have benefited from the mining boom and those that have not. The report identifies that the national economy is now in transition, that we have entered into the post mining boom construction phase and, together with the impact of the high Australian dollar on many of Australia's manufacturing exporters, this requires growth in other areas of the economy to maintain Australian living standards.

In the immediate term, this is public and private investment in infrastructure, and increased exporting activity. The report's authors argue that the trend of regional disparity will continue unless there is a concerted injection of infrastructure investment to underpin increased national productivity and, by supporting business investment, generate export income.

The report says as the mining boom continues to slow, the knowledge economy (where there is a focus on the growth and development of innovative, creative and entrepreneurial goods and services) is slowly re-emerging and will play an increasingly important role as the influence of the resource sector fades.

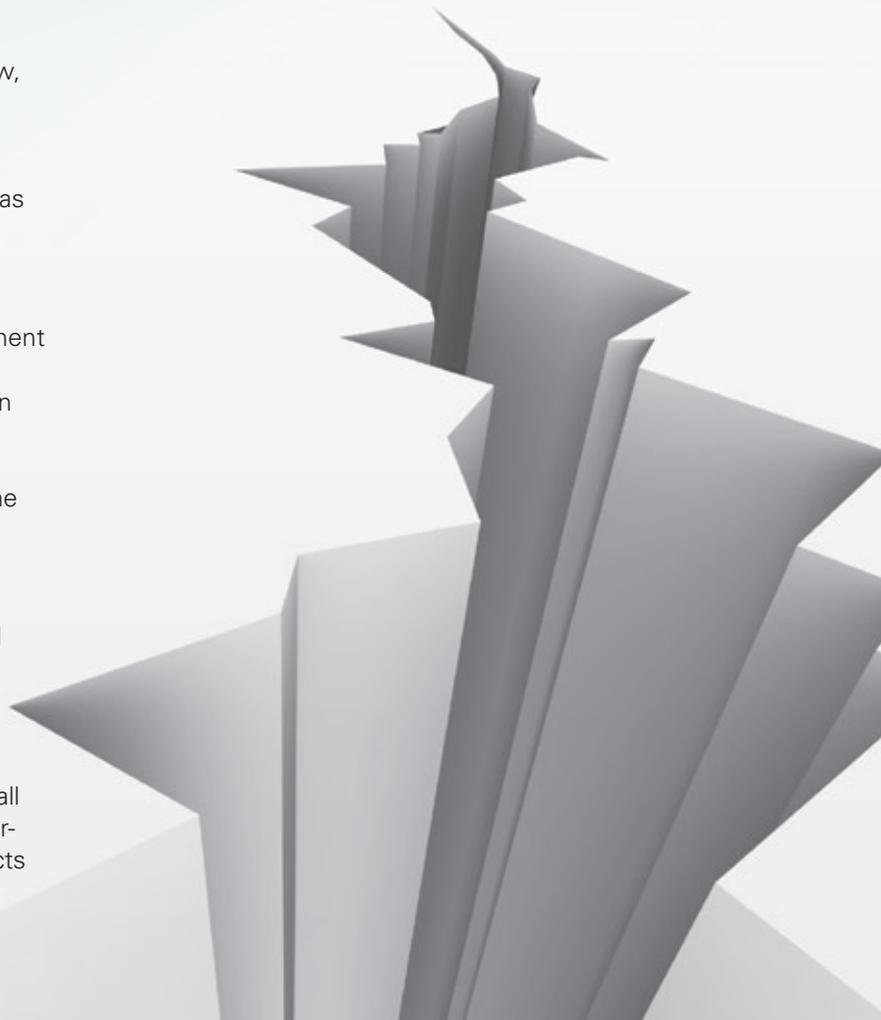
"Infrastructure investment will not only need to be about major projects like highways and airports, but investment in telecommunications, the built environment and associated activities that support the growth and development of the knowledge economy," said Dr Ian Manning from National Economics. "Investment in rural and regional development cannot be thought of in isolation, it needs all aspects to be considered in the equation." Dr Manning said.

ALGA President, Mayor Felicity-ann Lewis said for regions to continue to grow and develop, they will need a pool of educated, creative and entrepreneurial people to foster this growth. Creating opportunities in all regions was highlighted as an important factor in helping address the issue of youth unemployment, where the report describes mixed fortunes for the nation's young job seekers. The report found that in all but a small number of comparatively prosperous inner-city metropolitan regions, youth employment prospects are bleak. An increasing number of young people

have found themselves in a void between education and employment, participating in neither. The idea of relocating young people to regions where work is available needs to be re-thought, as there are already many young, unemployed people in these regions.

Mayor Lewis said all regions need to be smart about creating opportunities for their youth and pursue regionally appropriate educational, training and employment pathways that fully capitalise on the region's inherent strengths. "The report reinforces the necessity for Local Government to be fully engaged in regional economic development, ensuring national and state policy initiatives are developed to work with communities and their local economies to adapt and change, and build on strengths," she said.

**The report can be accessed from the ALGA website at [www.alga.asn.au](http://www.alga.asn.au). Please contact Zaman Khaliq-ul on 0406 488 073 for a password.**



# BRIGHTON INDUSTRIAL ESTATE GATEWAY TO GROWTH

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- Premium zoning and infrastructure
- Fully serviced sites with space for expansion

Brighton is poised to become the regional transportation hub for southern Tasmania, hosting major road and rail infrastructure, and within close commuting distance to Hobart International Airport and the Port of Hobart.

The Brighton Industrial Estate is at the centre of this major infrastructure initiative and represents a unique opportunity for business and industry development and expansion. With more than 300 hectares of grade one heavy industrial-zoned land featuring large block sizes, plus room for small and medium enterprises, the Brighton Industrial Estate represents some of the best industrial land parcels in southern Tasmania.

Brighton Council is recognised as having one of Tasmania's most progressive local government administrations so make the Brighton Industrial Estate part of your gateway to growth.



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# Highlights of the 2014 LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONFERENCE

**Two hundred delegates gathered at Wrest Point from 23-25 July for the 102nd Local Government Conference.**

*Building Stronger Councils and Communities* was the focus of the conference which explored topics including: setting the path for the Tasmanian economy; building reputation and results; planning for success; managing council debt; developing a thriving shopping precinct; avoiding community outrage through effective community engagement; building resilient local food economies; managing public risks from natural hazards; and body language.

The three-day event began with lively debate at the Annual General Meeting and General Meeting, which included an address by Local Government Minister, the Hon. Peter Gutwein MP. Following his presentation, delegates appreciated the opportunity to ask the Minister questions for an extended period of time.

That evening, the conference kicked off in earnest with the JLT/ALGWA Networking Hour. Whilst enjoying drinks and canapés, delegates and sponsors heard from ALGWA President, Ald Heather Chong and Mr

Andrew Ralph, representing event sponsor, Jardine Lloyd Thompson. Afterwards, the raffle winners were drawn and delegates made the most of the valuable networking opportunity.

On 24 July, under the direction of our MC, Daryl Peebles – AKA Clark Kent, delegates heard from an array of inspiring and thought provoking plenary speakers including: the Chief Economist of Commonwealth Securities – Craig James; the Campaign Director for RECOGNISE – Tim Gartrell; Corporate Cinderella CEO – Tarran Deane; and ALGA President – Mayor Felicity-ann Lewis. Delegates had the opportunity to stretch their backs (and paws) between presentations when Fit-X national body building competitor, Kalo Lowe – AKA Cat Woman conducted one of two Moving Moments, sponsored by IAP2 Australasia.

During the afternoon, the Executive Chair of the Planning Reform Taskforce – Mary Massina, Clarence City Council General Manager – Andrew Paul, and Rob Lynch of



Conference photography  
by Tony Lomas, Island26



Lynmore Holdings shared their insights in a panel discussion regarding the State's planning system and the role of the new Planning Reform Taskforce. Workshop speakers on the day included: Finance Consultant – John Comrie, leadership expert – Tarran Deane; and Leah Galvin of the Heart Foundation.

Conference delegates made the most of the extensive trade exhibition during the meal breaks, which featured interactive displays from 31 exhibitors in diverse Local Government-related industries from play equipment to bridge construction, telecommunications to tendering, and from finance to superannuation. There was certainly plenty to see and do!

After a full day of conferencing, delegates took the opportunity to unwind and mingle over a drink at the Commonwealth Bank Happy Hour, and to enter the raffle to raise funds for Ronald McDonald House – Hobart. First-time conference delegate, Mr Neville Warburton of Westpac was delighted to be drawn as the winner of a cruise and luncheon for two people at Peppermint Bay.

With donations from conference delegates and the Local Government Association of Tasmania, combined with the raffle funds, a total of \$1,500 was raised for Ronald McDonald House which provides much needed support to seriously ill children from rural Tasmania and their families. The cheque was presented by LGAT President, Mayor Barry Easter in August.

### MAV Insurance Conference Dinner

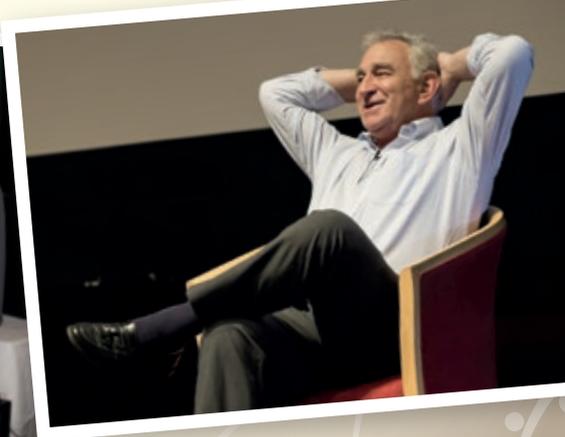
The Conference Dinner, sponsored by MAV Insurance, was attended by 270 guests who enjoyed an evening of fine dining and entertainment in a winter wonderland setting at the scenic Boardwalk Gallery. A highlight of the evening was the presentation of three awards to Gerald Monson, Mayor Barry Easter and Mayor Mike Gaffney. Full details can be found on pages 6 and 7.

On the final day of conference, the day began with workshops conducted by: retail guru – John Stanley; Chair and President of IAP2 Australasia – Carla Leversedge; and the Director of Security, Emergency Management and Bushfire Recovery – Mathew Healey.

The workshops were followed by a thought provoking presentation by innovations expert, Roger La Salle, and the announcement of the winners of 2014 Local Government Awards for Excellence by MAV President, Clr Bill McArthur (see details on page 18). The conference concluded on a high note with a lively and insightful presentation by international body language expert, Tony Morris from the U.K.

Prior to the delegates' departure, the major conference prize winners were drawn and announced. Congratulations to Clr Carol Bracken of West Tamar Council who won the Wrest Point Special Occasions Accommodation Package for two people, Jo Lovell of Jardine Lloyd Thompson who was drawn as the winner of a Powerhouse Coaching Session with Corporate

*Continued Page 14* ►





**The 2015 Local Government Conference will be held in Launceston, from 22-24 July**

## Special Thanks to our Sponsors and Supporters

The 2014 Local Government Conference was made possible through the generous support of the following Sponsors and Valued Contributors:

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► From Page 6

Cinderella, and Central Highlands Mayor Deirdre Flint who was the recipient of the Fuji Xerox Tasmania Delegates Passport prize – a Samsung Galaxy S5 Smartphone kindly donated by Telstra.

A big thank you to all the delegates in attendance, along with the speakers, sponsors and trade exhibitors who contributed to the success of this year's event. We would also like to thank our MC, Daryl Peebles for his efforts and of course, Wrest Point for their wonderful venue, delicious food and first-rate service.

**To view some images from the Local Government Conference, visit the Island26 website at <http://island26.com.au/tag/local-government-association-of-tasmania>.**



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# 2014 WORKSAFE TASMANIA AWARDS PRESENTATION DINNER



Join local radio presenter, writer, producer, actor, comedian and MC, Ryk Goddard as we recognise and celebrate the achievements of all entrants, finalists and winners in the 2014 WorkSafe Awards. After the formal presentations, continue celebrating Halloween with dancing and music by Dr Fink.

**Date:**

Friday 31 October 2014  
6.30 pm for 7.00 pm

**Venue:**

Federation Ballroom,  
Hotel Grand Chancellor,  
Hobart

**Tickets:**

\$ 110 each (includes  
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**Dress:**

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After five



# Dorset and Central Coast Councils Deliver EXCELLENCE FOR THEIR COMMUNITIES

**Activities and investment in encouraging fitter communities and healthier lifestyles has seen two Tasmanian councils recognised in the annual Local Government Awards for Excellence, announced on 25 July, at the 2014 Local Government Conference.**

The Awards for Excellence aim to promote outstanding achievement and inspire leading management practice and continuous improvement within the Local Government sector.



*(L-R) Dorset Council's Youth Health and Recreation Officer, Mathew Handy and Mayor Barry Jarvis*

In the **Delivering Excellence – Smaller Councils (populations under 10,000)** category, Dorset Council was recognised for delivering an innovative and far-reaching program of activities targeting youth aged 12-25. The Active Youth Program, relying on volunteers and designed with input from the Dorset Council's youth advisors, was created as a way of engaging and uniting the local youth to adopt healthy lifestyles through fun, recreational activities including festivals, holiday programs, a travelling awareness program and trips for groups to new places, and to develop young leaders in the community through social inclusion.

Judges praised Council for delivering a free service on a limited budget to youth in the region and said the program was engaging a broad range of community participants, and assisting in overcoming disaffection through tough economic times in the Municipal Area.

In the **Delivering Excellence – Larger Councils (populations over 10,000)** category, Central Coast Council was recognised for its development of the Penguin Mountain Bike Park.

With mountain biking a fast growing sport, tourism and leisure market, Central Coast Council saw the construction of international standard mountain bike infrastructure at Penguin and into the Dial Range to the south would increase visitor numbers to the region.



*(L-R) LGAT President Mayor Barry Easter, Central Coast Council Mayor Jan Bonde and MAV President, Clr Bill McArthur*

They also wanted it to be community accessible. Driven by the Cradle Coast Mountain Bike Club, the project was also designed to facilitate opportunities to provide training and engagement initiatives for a range of community stakeholders from schools, to employment training providers.

Judges commended Central Coast Council for its vision in developing a project with short, medium and long-term benefits, and in forming key partnerships using various funding sources to deliver a quality infrastructure project that the whole community can benefit from and be proud of.

The Local Government Awards are sponsored by MAV Insurance and were presented by MAV President, Clr Bill McArthur. Each winning council received a trophy and, for the first time, \$1,000 prize money for staff development activities.

Congratulations to the winners and also to the Local Government Awards for Excellence finalists:

## **Delivering Excellence – Larger Councils**

**Clarence City Council** – Clarence: An Age-Friendly City and Community

**Burnie City Council** – Delegations System

**Launceston City Council** – Launceston City Council eServices

## **Delivering Excellence – Smaller Councils**

**Flinders Council** – Website Upgrade

*Councils are encouraged to show their support for the recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the Australian Constitution*



## LOCAL GOVERNMENT CRUCIAL TO RECOGNISE

**Local Government will play a key role in a successful referendum to recognise the first Australians in our nation's Constitution.**

For decades, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders have been urging our nation to a referendum to recognise the long and impressive first chapter of Australia and the people who forged it in Australia's Constitution. Support for this push has grown across the breadth of the federal Parliament over the past decade, and the RECOGNISE movement of everyday Australians now has more than 211,000 supporters.

Here in Tasmania, a grassroots group - Tasmanians for Recognition - has led the work of raising public awareness and in May, Premier Will Hodgman moved a motion in the State Parliament to demonstrate wide, cross-party backing and send a strong message of support for this change.

In a keynote speech at the Local Government Conference, held in July, RECOGNISE joint Campaign Director, Tim Gartrell thanked Local Government leaders who have already shown their support for the movement and urged others to get involved too.

There are two objectives to this referendum. We need to fix the silence in the Constitution about the long presence of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in this country, and ensure there is no place for racial discrimination in our founding document. Right now, there is no reference at all to the tens of thousands of years of our nation's history prior to 1788 and there are still clauses that allow racial discrimination by governments. The Constitution mentions lighthouses, beacons and buoys, but not the first Australians.

Detailed work on a referendum model was begun by an Expert Panel in 2011 and continues with a Joint Select Committee of the Federal Parliament. That committee will hold hearings in Tasmania from 12-13 November to seek further local input on the proposal to go to referendum.

In the meantime, the campaign seeks everyday Australians and institutions to demonstrate their support and join this movement. AFL, Cricket Australia and Telstra are among the major institutions that have declared their support for this referendum.

Local governments, councillors and mayors too are encouraged to become actively involved. Lord mayors in Melbourne, Adelaide, Darwin, Perth and many regional centres have lent their support as the national RECOGNISE relay came through their cities over the past 12 months.

At a local RECOGNISE event held in February, Aboriginal community member, Paul Docking said recognition would "advance our nation and be inclusive for all peoples," while Devonport Mayor Steve Martin said, "I hope for our city to be part of this people's movement to finally recognise Australia's first inhabitants and our nation's unique Indigenous cultures in our founding document."

**Join the movement at [www.recognise.org.au](http://www.recognise.org.au), get involved and declare your organisation's support for the RECOGNISE charter. For enquiries, email [tasmanians@recognise.org.au](mailto:tasmanians@recognise.org.au).**



## FARMERS' MARKET STUDY SHOWS BENEFITS FOR CONSUMERS, PRODUCERS AND COMMUNITY

**A study into Australia's farmers' markets has revealed that they provide a number of benefits to farmers, consumers and the communities in which they are situated.**

Funded and released by the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation (RIRDC), the study considered farmers' markets for four stakeholder groups – consumers, farmers, value added food businesses and local communities.

The study identified a range of strengths and weaknesses of Australia's farmers' markets in relation to these four stakeholder groups.

The study found that farmers' markets are valued by participating farmers and food businesses, with nearly 80% of stallholders participating in a survey reporting that they made a profit through their farmers' market stall. Farmers' markets not only provide an economically viable distribution option but also a platform for farmers and value added food businesses to grow their business, test their products with consumers, and improve other aspects of their business, such as management approaches.

The study found that farmers' markets could provide consumers with: alternative access to fresh, local and seasonal food sourced directly from the food producer; exposure to a variety of foods; the opportunity to learn about how the food was produced; and how to use it. It also provided community members the opportunity to support the local community, local businesses and the environment.

The study reported that local communities can benefit from farmers' markets through utilising them as a tactic to achieve important community outcomes such as health, education, tourism, social wellbeing and regional economic benefits. However, farmers' market may not suit all communities' demographics and preferences.

**The report, titled *Understanding the Characteristics of Australian Farmers' Markets* is available for free download from the RIRDC website at <https://rirdc.infoservices.com.au/items/14-040>.**

# Are Your Information Risks Invisible?

As we transition to the digital age, rapid technology changes bring new risks to information. Unfortunately, unlike financial, safety, IT or physical threats, threats to information are often not identified as part of strategic risk assessments.

It is likely that your Council regularly communicates with residents, businesses and the wider community via websites and increasingly, via social media or mobile devices. Customers are starting to expect fully online content. Some organisations are starting to expose subsets of corporate information in databases to the public to optimise their business operations. However, while we have seen an improvement in the timely delivery of information, threats to that information also increase.

In an electronic environment, where records do not exist in a physical form, risks to business information and records are often mistakenly identified and treated as technology risks. However, it is more likely that it is your information, not your technology, which is the core business asset, so a good governance strategy will consider information assets as part of the overall risk management framework.

Applying risk management processes is key to managing information in the digital environment. The consequences of information loss, theft, or leaks due to insufficient consideration of the risks could be very serious. Adopting a risk management approach will assist councils to identify and prioritise high risk business areas so they can apply appropriate levels of

control where risks to core information assets are likely to be highest. The application of risk management processes to address information risks will also assist agencies to comply with the *Archives Act 1983*.

**New guidelines and customisable templates have been developed by the Government Recordkeeping Unit at the Tasmanian Archive and Heritage Office (TAHO) to help maximise the opportunities of transitioning to digital while still managing the risks. To obtain these resources, visit [www.linc.tas.gov.au/global/govtrecordkeeping](http://www.linc.tas.gov.au/global/govtrecordkeeping).**

## New Guidelines Plan for More Child Care Places

New national planning and development guidelines for child care facilities have been developed in a bid to encourage innovative ways to deliver families more child care places closer to home and work.



The *Guidelines for the Planning and Development of Child Care Facilities* have been developed by the University of Technology, Sydney's Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government, with Federal Government support.

The voluntary guidelines aim to encourage local governments to take a holistic approach to child care planning across their organisations in order to increase places and reduce development barriers and delays including:

- Considering the need for child care facilities when planning new or redeveloped areas;
- Co-locating child care facilities within existing public or community facilities;
- Ensuring child care is appropriately reflected in Local Government development zonings; and
- Locating child care facilities close to public transport hubs or key bikeways.

Easy-to-use checklists are included to help councils incorporate the guidelines into their day-to-day operations.

**The guidelines are available online from [www.education.gov.au](http://www.education.gov.au).**

# BUSHFIRES

DEBBIE PILLING,  
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## ... at what cost?

**Once again, a class action against an electricity distributor that is alleged to have caused a bushfire destroying a significant number of properties has hit the headlines<sup>1</sup>. These news reports are becoming more common as affected property owners look for compensation for their destroyed, or damaged properties where they are either uninsured or underinsured.**

There are a number of factors contributing to these cases becoming more frequent including the public becoming more aware of their rights, active litigation funders, changing environmental conditions, individuals looking to hold someone accountable for their loss, and the courts ensuring that if a company is at fault, they are penalised and amend their ways. Whatever the reasons, large corporations hold significant insurance for their liability exposures and are seen by some as having very large pockets.

Electricity suppliers are not the only organisations exposed to these actions. Local authorities, the fire service, rail companies and others have the potential to directly, or indirectly start bushfires, or put properties at risk. What is the responsibility of local councils

approving development at the rural urban interface, or refusing to allow trees to be cut down? How about the responsibility of the fire service when back burning gets out of control? In today's litigious world, there are certain individuals who seek to apportion blame wherever there is the possibility of a payout but there may also be an obligation by those who do cause bushfires to compensate those who sustain a loss.

From a national perspective, the broad areas exposed to seasonal bushfire are well known. Identifying the bushfire liability that could stem from a business is far more complicated. Some companies have a fairly confined exposure based on their assets, for example power lines or rail networks. What about local councils, or emergency services?

*With populations at the rural-urban fringe growing, and the predicted impact of climate change, the risks associated with bushfire are likely to increase*

Photo courtesy of Warren Frey



Quantifying the potential exposure is extremely complex and involves many factors including identifying properties at risk, the potential spread of a fire, variations on the “stay and defend, or leave early” policy adopted by at risk homeowners, amongst others. Added to these, are the complexities for each individual factor. Identifying properties at highest risk of bushfire does not rule out a loss for properties at less risk which could be impacted by flying embers. Using historical bushfire footprints as a guide to future risk may not be quite so relevant where the land use has changed, or fire services have relocated. The reaction of homeowners at risk from a bushfire was expected to change after Victoria’s Black Saturday bushfires in 2009. However, recent research has found that most people in high bushfire risk areas would adopt a “wait and see” approach on whether or not they should leave their home for a safer environment on a Code Red day (the most extreme of days on the fire danger rating system).

We have seen relatively few catastrophic bushfires, although, this has meant that research on the cost associated with bushfires is limited to only a few very significant events (such as 2009, 1983 and 1967). Interestingly, in the USA, where wildfires carry many of the same traits as bushfires in Australia, their research focuses on the cost from a fire fighting perspective, including the impact on firefighters themselves, rather than the extensive damage to properties and homeowners.

In Australia, a few reports have considered not just the cost to property but also the economic costs associated with death and injury. Other areas not so readily quantifiable, that should be considered, are the impact to the environment, such as polluted water or health issues, including respiratory conditions occurring hundreds of kilometres from the site of a fire. Since 2009, Willis Risk Services have worked closely with a number of organisations with potential liabilities to identify and quantify that level of potential risk. This includes not just their own assets, or the property of others, but those additional potential costs from injury, business interruption and other indirect costs.

Class action legal costs have the potential to be significant and are currently averaging around \$7.5 million per case. Litigation funders typically receive 30% of the settlement per event but no precedent has been set whether the courts would look to increase the settlement to ensure sufficient funds are available for the claimants themselves. Litigation funding only occurs where there is insurance available but what happens when insurance is insufficient? Who pays the costs? Could we have a scenario where those seeking compensation are actually the same entities that will be penalised with higher taxes, or pay higher electricity bills to cover the costs?

With all of these issues in mind, the Royal Commission into the 2009 Black Saturday bushfires has already highlighted the need for shared responsibility between those in authority and those at risk. This emphasis was also influenced by a perceived increase in public expectations of emergency service agencies. The success of the fire and emergency services may have encouraged increased public reliance on them, and decreased interest among those at risk in developing their own bushfire management capacity. One interview notes homeowners leaving for work and waving at the firefighters staying behind preparing to defend their properties, presumably supremely confident that their actions would be successful and their properties safeguarded. Expectations may need to change significantly before a shift in responsibility is acknowledged.

The Royal Commission has stated that it would be a mistake to treat Black Saturday as a ‘one-off’ event. With populations at the rural-urban interface growing and the predicted impact of climate change, the risks associated with bushfire are likely to increase. Until community resilience and shared responsibility is more effective, ignoring the potential threat and associated costs could be catastrophic for many organisations.

**For further information, visit the Willis Risk Services website at [www.willis.com.au](http://www.willis.com.au), or email [Debbie Pilling at pillingd@willis.com](mailto:Debbie.Pilling@willis.com).**

<sup>1</sup>\$200 million class action against Endeavour Energy, launched by hundreds of residents of the Blue Mountains, NSW.





## Derwent Valley CRSP Volunteer Service Award

The Derwent Valley Mayor Martyn Evans presents Marlene Horne with a Volunteer Service Award and certificate of appreciation for her work and support on the Derwent Valley Community Road Safety Partnership Committee.

Marlene has been a regular member of the Derwent Valley Community Road Safety Partnership Committee since its inception in 2012 and brings with her much local knowledge of driving on rural roads in the Derwent Valley.

Marlene resides out at Maydena and has been specifically instrumental in helping support and promote the committee's initiatives within that region, in particular the committee's new "Country Driving" brochure launched earlier this year.



The Derwent Valley Community Road Safety Partnership Committee saw a need for information on driving through the Derwent Valley and came up with the brochure concept supported by photos that were taken by local photographer and committee member Peter Sweetlove. The Committee is well represented by Police, SES, Bush Watch, Community House, the Derwent Valley Football Club, Neighbourhood Watch, Derwent Valley School Principals, Volunteer Ambulance, Derwent Valley Council and also the Department of State Growth. The Committee is administered by Matt Hill Youth Participation Officer with Council and chaired by Martyn Evans the Derwent Valley Council Mayor.

## Safe winter motoring – North West CRSP Program

In May 2014, all North West Community Road Safety Partnership Program Councils participated in a safe winter motoring campaign.

A featured newspaper one full page article was placed in the Advocate Newspaper, using a local photograph to highlight the dangers of Tasmanian driving conditions. Each community supported the campaign in various ways through Mayors' messages, electronic advertising, radio advertising, variable message boards, and media displays.

The North West Community Road Safety Partnership Program winter driving education campaign focused on safer cars, safer drivers, safer roads, and safer speeds for the conditions. Road Safety advice was offered for snow and black ice in the Waratah Wynyard, Central Coast, Kentish and West Coast Councils and was highlighted as hazardous driving conditions during winter.

Safer Driving tips during winter included allowing a 3 second gap between vehicles, driving with headlights on and adjusting the vehicles speed for the conditions. Motorists were encouraged to keep their cars safe for the coming winter by checking that their vehicles were compliant with the current vehicle standards law, as well as general advice for tyre pressure, wiper blades and windscreen visibility.

## Keys to P's Circular Head Community Road Safety Partnership (CRSP) Program

During the July 2014, school holidays Circular Head Council and the Department of State Growth held a Keys to P's session through its Look out for your Mates CRSP program. 22 participants were introduced to the key topics of planning their supervisory driving sessions while gaining their required 50 log book hours.

Circular Head Council's Recreation and Community Officer, Deb Mainwaring said 'I hope the session was a positive learning experience for the learners and their supervisors'. The session also involves having the learner licence testing officer available on hand for people who wish to take the learner licence as a part of participating in the session.



*Keys to Ps participants here*



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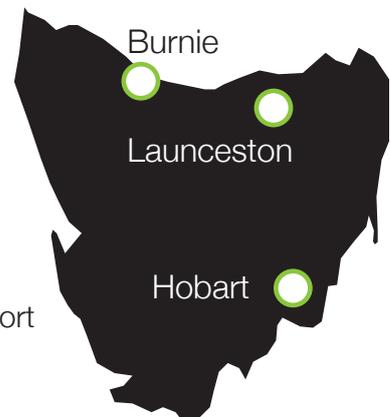


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# TasWater's first Twelve Months: Much achieved and much still to do...

MIKE BREWSTER, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

TasWater

The 1 July marked the first 12 months of TasWater. When I reflect on that time, I'm pleased at what we have accomplished in charting a new course for water and sewerage in Tasmania under a single, statewide provider.

Our first 12 months has been a year of consolidation and foundation building, with a lot of work put into restructuring the business. I appreciate the commitment of our employees who have worked to get TasWater transitioned as smoothly as possible in a time of great change.

The work of the three former water corporations at the start of the reform journey gave us a solid base to work from, with many important projects and initiatives well under way when TasWater started operations. Careful planning in the transition phase has seen a continuation of these essential works and programs, with little disruption.

Our targets for savings and efficiencies under the single business have been reached in our first year of operations and we are also distributing our budgeted dividend to our shareholders. We have completed projects that commenced under the three water corporations. The Westbury Water Treatment Plant, Lauderdale Sewerage System, the decommissioning of the Taroona Sewerage Treatment Plant and upgrades to the Conglomerate Dam in Queenstown, to name a few. These projects exemplify the contribution we can make to the economic and social wellbeing of the State.

I am looking forward to the time where I can reflect on the next 12 months and what it brings for our people, our customers and our owners. Our corporate planning process has seen ongoing consultation with our Board, executive, workforce and key stakeholders, and we have a detailed corporate plan for the next three years. This is coupled with a new Price and Services Plan which has been approved by the TasWater Board and will now go through a public consultation process with the Tasmanian Economic Regulator in the coming months.

*(L-R) Meander Valley Mayor Craig Perkins and Deputy Mayor Deb White, TasWater Chairman Miles Hampton and CEO Mike Brewster*

In short, we have a clear path to take the business into the future.

Work is beginning on the Greater Launceston Sewerage Strategy as it goes into the community consultation phase. Our people are currently gathering the thoughts and opinions of the Launceston community to help us design a solution that reflects their needs and that of the surrounding environment, while taking into account the need to move to resolve the issues we currently have in the system.

Our Community Engagement team is also working on King and Flinders Islands to take plans for new water treatment facilities to the communities to gather their thoughts and views. Our Assets and Works Delivery teams are developing and executing upgrades and improvements to our systems right across the State. Upgrades to water systems are underway in townships including Ringarooma, Ouse, Hamilton and Tunbridge. Sewerage Treatment Plant upgrades are underway or imminent in Rosebury, Rosny and Kingborough.

There are 24 communities on 'boil water' notices and two towns on 'do not consume' alerts. We plan to address the majority of these in the Price and Services Plan period of 2015-2018. Our sewerage treatment plants do not always meet environmental standards set by regulators, particularly in times of heavy rainfall. Although much work is being done in improving our operations and maintenance systems, our statistics on breaks and spillages are well below national standards.

We are on a journey with our customers and stakeholders on issues such as trade waste, developer charges and moving all customers to target tariff. As we approach the release of our second *Price and Service Plan* next year, we will be redoubling our efforts to continue clear communication and consultation with customers and the community.

With our restructure now complete, I'm pleased to say that we have a group of enthusiastic employees who have the skills, the plan and the commitment to make the next 12 months a success for TasWater.



# LED STREET LIGHTS

## SAVE MONEY, CARBON EMISSIONS AND LIVES

Switching to LED street lighting could save Australia's local councils up to \$87 million and prevent 720,000 tonnes of CO2 emissions from entering the atmosphere each year. To capture these benefits, state governments need to either change the regulations covering street lighting, or help transfer street lights to councils on fair terms, as has happened in New Zealand and parts of Canada.

A new practice note, *Towards More Sustainable Street Lighting*, released by the Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia (IPWEA) and supported by the Australian Centre of Excellence

for Local Government (ACELG) calculates that street lighting in Australia costs at least \$400 million per year. But whilst councils are legally responsible for providing and paying for street lighting, the lights are mostly owned and maintained by the electricity distribution utilities.

The practice note also highlights improved safety outcomes for drivers and pedestrians where LED lighting is in use. The authors of the practice note will be conducting a series of workshops around Australia in October. View the practice note and workshop details online at [www.acelg.org.au](http://www.acelg.org.au).



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# SUPPORTING ELECTED MEMBERS

## *to Serve the Community*

**Elected members play a pivotal role in their community: representing community interests, providing leadership and ensuring that local needs are met. A large part of this role is juggling the diverse needs of a range of stakeholders while also meeting legal and code of conduct obligations. In recognition of this, and as part of its commitment to assisting councils build a strong integrity framework, the Integrity Commission is working with councils across the State to provide support to elected members.**

The Integrity Commission recognises that councils are in a unique position due to the wide range of roles they fulfil and their close ties with the community. As the public face of council, elected members encounter additional challenges as they interact with a broad range of people - from other elected members, to general managers and staff, businesses and community members. These stakeholders may, at times, have competing needs and will hold a council and its elected members accountable for decisions they make.

Elected members also need to be conversant with a large amount of information to make informed decisions in council meetings, as well having a good understanding of the obligations of the *Local Government Act 1993* and Elected Members' Code of Conduct.

The Commission is committed to supporting elected members in fulfilling the requirements of this important role. In 2014, we have renewed our focus on Local Government and, since the beginning of the year, have been meeting with general managers throughout the State to gain an understanding of the key issues facing each council and to provide advice, support and training. Through discussions with councils, the Commission has identified some of the key risk areas for elected members – managing conflict of interest, involvement in planning decisions, and maintaining confidentiality.

To support elected members, the Commission encourages councils to have a robust code of conduct and well-documented policies and procedures in place. Clear processes not only assist with decision-making, they also protect elected members. Being able to demonstrate transparency and accountability builds community trust.

On request from a number of councils, the Commission will be providing ethics and integrity training for elected members across the State after the October elections. These sessions will commence in November 2014 and will continue into early 2015. The Commission is working closely with the Local Government Division of DPAC and LGAT to ensure that training and support from the different agencies is coordinated.

The Misconduct Prevention Education and Research team will be in further contact with councils shortly to arrange relevant training and to identify particular risk areas that councils would like covered in the sessions.

**To contact the Integrity Commission, please call 1300 720 289, or email [mper@integrity.tas.gov.au](mailto:mper@integrity.tas.gov.au).**



# BRONZE for Burnie City

**Burnie City Council has taken out third in the national Local Government Managers Australia (LGMA) Management Challenge. The team of six aspiring Local Government leaders from Burnie City Council challenged the top seven teams from Australia and New Zealand in late June.**

The LGMA Management Challenge is arguably Australia's most sophisticated professional development program for current and aspiring Local Government leaders, providing a hands-on approach to professional development that produces relevant, tangible and enduring personal, team and organisational outcomes.

Burnie City Council General Manager, Andrew Wardlaw said, "It is a fantastic achievement to firstly come out on top in the State final, but then to represent Tasmania at the nationals and take home third is incredible."

The national competition saw the council group act as the senior management team for the day, where numerous situations and tasks were required from them in a short amount of time.

Burnie City Council Team Leader Michael Foster said we are thrilled with the results and confident we represented Burnie and Tasmania very professionally. "Not only has it been a fantastic networking opportunity, the experience has changed the way we work and I feel we have all returned with ways of being more productive," he said.

Victoria's Warrnambool City Council took out first place, followed by Whakatane District Council of New Zealand in second place.

**For enquiries about the 2015 LGMA Management Challenge, please contact Pam Crawford at [Pamela.Crawford@lgmentas.org.au](mailto:Pamela.Crawford@lgmentas.org.au).**



*Members of Burnie City Council's LGMA Management Challenge team (from L to R)  
Gary Neil - Director of Works and Services and Team Mentor,  
Sarah Reynolds - Performing Arts Coordinator,  
Libby Dobson - Communications Officer,  
Chris Gleeson - Permit Authority Officer,  
Katie Smith - Youth Development Officer,  
Chris Treloar - Project Manager, and  
Michael Foster - Works Coordinator pictured with Burnie City Council General Manager, Andrew Wardlaw (centre back)*

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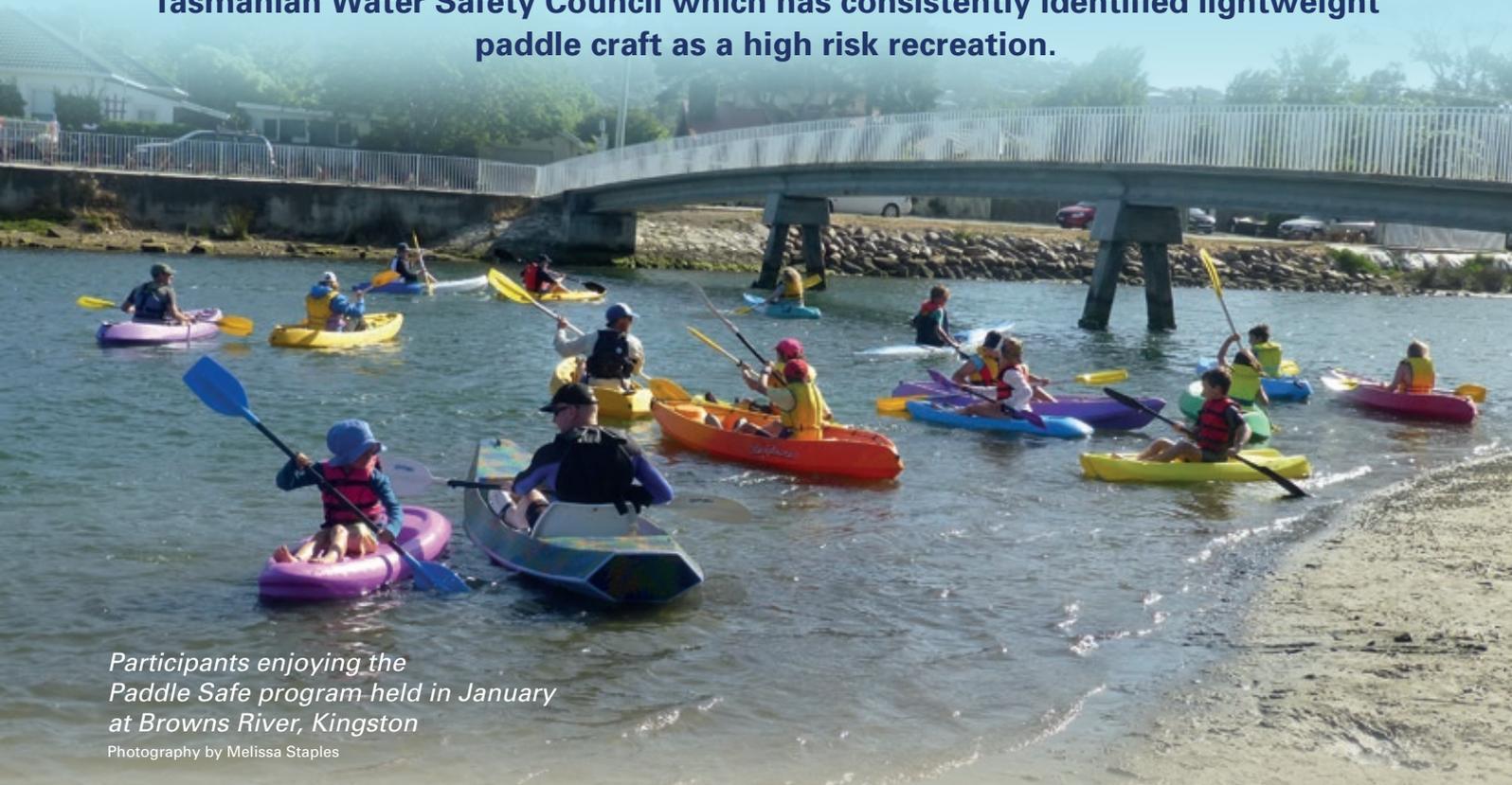
**stornoway**



# Kingborough Council Leads the Way in KAYAK SAFETY

IAN ROSS, RECREATIONAL BOATING PROJECT OFFICER  
Marine and Safety Tasmania

**Marine and Safety Tasmania (MAST) and Surf Lifesaving Tasmania (SLST) are working together to roll out a state-wide education and skills program known as Paddle Safe. The program is supported by the Tasmanian Water Safety Council which has consistently identified lightweight paddle craft as a high risk recreation.**



*Participants enjoying the Paddle Safe program held in January at Browns River, Kingston*

Photography by Melissa Staples

In January 2014, MAST and SLST, in conjunction with Kingborough Council, saw the development of a practical program with the aim of educating paddlers, from beginner to advanced, around safety and paddle skill development. The pilot session attracted over 40 paddlers to Browns River, Kingston. People from a range of backgrounds, from grandparents to grandchildren, and those new to paddling, who may have received their paddle craft as a Christmas present, came along to the 1.5-hour session. It is hoped that the success surrounding this educational program can be mirrored around the State as part of a larger Paddle Safe initiative.

Since October 2013, there have been 28 rescues from paddle craft that MAST is aware of. MAST and SLST are looking to Local Government to assist in the promotion and delivery of various aspects of Paddle Safe. This coming summer will see 25 sessions, similar to the one at Kingston, run around the State. These sessions are designed to pass on knowledge of weather, safety equipment and practical paddling advice from experts

so that paddlers can actively prepare themselves before setting out on the water. A representative from MAST or SLST will be in touch with each council in the coming months to discuss the opportunities that will be available to councils to engage your local community in a positive, healthy and educational program.

Due to the success of the pilot Paddle Safe program held in Kingston last summer, Kingborough Council will run further sessions prior to Christmas and on Australia Day in 2015. Kingborough Council's Community Development Officer, Melissa Staples said considering 10,000 paddle craft have been sold in the last two years, it is important that they are used correctly. "It is imperative that mums, dads and children have some knowledge prior to hitting the water, as there are so many people using these craft who have limited experience and can get into difficulty very quickly, especially in offshore winds and cold water", she said.

**For more details about Paddle Safe, contact Ian Ross at MAST at [ian.ross@mast.tas.gov.au](mailto:ian.ross@mast.tas.gov.au), or call (03) 6235 8859.**



# Legionnaires' disease: are you at risk?

Legionella testing guidelines have changed. Government legislation requires all healthcare facilities to undertake testing of their warm water systems for the presence of legionella bacteria every six months. Testing simply requires a 100 ml jar of water from the tap to be tested.

## What is Legionnaires' disease?

Legionnaires' disease is an infection of the lungs caused by exposure to legionella bacteria.

Legionella bacteria are found in low levels in many areas of the environment, including lakes, rivers, creeks and soils. They may also be present in artificial environments, such as air conditioning cooling towers and warm water systems. These systems provide ideal conditions for growth of the legionella bacteria well beyond normal environmental levels. The presence of other water-borne bacteria, amoeba and algae can further enhance the growth of legionella bacteria by providing them with nutrients and protection from chlorine that is present in the systems.

**Warm water systems** were introduced into healthcare facilities to avoid accidental burns during showering of patients, by reducing the temperature of the water at the tap from the usual 60°C-70°C to a much safer 30°C-50°C. The temperature of the water in the warm water systems is regulated by a thermostatic mixer valve (TMV) near the water outlets. The TMV mixes hot and cold water together before the water reaches

the tap or showerhead. The TMV maintains the temperature of the water between 30°C and 50°C which, whilst safer for patients, is an ideal temperature for legionella bacteria to multiply to very high numbers, despite the presence of the usual levels of chlorine. The risk of contamination increases if the system is not regularly flushed or disinfected. It is essential that such systems have microbiological testing performed at regular intervals to check for the presence of legionella bacteria.

A recent case of Legionnaires' disease in a Brisbane hospital has highlighted the need to ensure that all warm water systems are free from legionella bacteria. The source of this infection was traced back to taps in the bathrooms of the facility.

**Legionnaires' disease** is a type of pneumonia caused by *Legionella pneumophila*. There are 39 types of *Legionella pneumophila* but most pneumonia is caused by type 1. Legionnaires' disease can be life-threatening.

**Pontiac fever** is also caused by legionella bacteria, however this flu-like disease is milder, non-pneumonic and non life-threatening.



## How is Legionnaires' disease spread?

The disease is contracted by inhaling water droplets, spray or mist from taps, showerheads, therapeutic pools and spas which contain legionella bacteria.

**The disease is not spread from person to person.**

The risk of contracting the disease is increased for those people whose immune system is already under stress from an illness or medical treatment. Diabetics, those with chronic lung disease, heart or kidney disease, the elderly, smokers and heavy drinkers are most at risk from Legionnaires' disease. Males are more at risk than females.

## Testing warm water systems for legionella bacteria

The *Public Health Act 1997*, together with the associated '*Guidelines for the Control of Legionella in Regulated Systems 2012*' issued by the Director of Public Health, Tasmania, set out the requirements for registering, using and maintaining a regulated warm water system. Specifically, the documents outline the minimum requirements for the legionella testing, which the legislation states must be performed and recorded by healthcare facilities for their registered warm water systems. Testing for legionella bacteria in warm water systems must be performed by a NATA-accredited laboratory (National Association of Testing Authorities). A copy of the '*Guidelines for the Control of Legionella in Regulated Systems 2012*' may be obtained from the following website:

[www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/peh/public\\_health\\_guidelines](http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/peh/public_health_guidelines)

For all enquiries about collecting samples from warm water systems for legionella testing, please contact:  
Christine Pullin at the Tasmanian Laboratory Services laboratory in Launceston on (03) 6334 3424 or by email at [christine.pullin@dspl.com.au](mailto:christine.pullin@dspl.com.au)

## How do I arrange for testing to be performed on my warm water system?

Tasmanian Laboratory Services (Taslab) is located in Launceston and has been performing food and water testing for more than 20 years throughout Tasmania. Taslab is NATA-registered for a wide range of testing, including the testing of water samples for legionella bacteria. Taslab NATA accreditation number is 14410 and all testing is performed using Australian Standard methods.

### What type of sample is required?

The test requires a 100mL jar of water from the tap to be tested. This jar contains a special preservative for legionella testing. The sample must be kept refrigerated until it is picked up by the courier and the facility name, date and time of collection must also be clearly displayed on the sample jar.

### How do I obtain the sample jars to test my system?

Simply call the laboratory on (03) 6334 3424 and request sufficient jars for your testing needs. The jars, together with collection instructions and a request form, will be sent to you with the next available courier.

### How often do I need to test?

The guidelines require testing warm water systems six monthly.

### How long do results take?

Legionella results take 7 days from the time of receipt of the sample in the laboratory.

### How will I be notified of the results?

All reports are printed on NATA endorsed letterhead. Reports will be mailed to you but may also be faxed or emailed to you upon request.

**All positive results will be phoned and faxed or emailed to you as soon as they become known.**



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## New Report Identifies Australia's Stroke 'Hotspots'

A new report released by the National Stroke Foundation identifies the current and future 'hotspots' for stroke, which will help inform Australia's response to the disease.

The *Stroke in Australia: no postcode left untouched* report identifies where stroke has already had a significant impact in Australia, as well as where it is likely to be a problem in the future. By identifying where there are high numbers of people living with risk factors such as high blood pressure and obesity, governments and service providers will be better able to support at-risk individuals with the aim of reducing instances of stroke in the community. For a copy of the report, visit <http://strokefoundation.com.au>.

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# FRUIT AND VEGETABLES

## Out of Reach



### **Alarming new research shows the price of healthy food is unaffordable for many Tasmanian households and it's partly due to the shopping choices available in our towns and neighbourhoods.**

Findings from the University of Tasmania Healthy Food Basket Survey show some Tasmanian families need to spend more than 40% of their household budget to eat for good health. Additionally, of the shops in Tasmania where you can buy fresh fruit and vegetables, only 5% are located in low income areas.

Heart Foundation CEO, Graeme Lynch said in low income areas we found that fruit and vegetables were more expensive, with reduced variety and availability. "Unfortunately, the most disadvantaged in our communities are the ones who find it really challenging to eat a healthy diet," he said.

The survey results will support action to address these challenges through the Healthy Food Access Project, run by the Heart Foundation and funded by Tasmania Medicare Local through the Australian Government's Tasmanian Health Assistance Package. A total of \$480,000 will be offered under the project to fund initiatives across Tasmania in communities that are most impacted by the study findings.

"This information gives local governments a clearer picture of how hard it is for some households to afford and access healthy food in their area," Mr Lynch said. "It's not just the responsibility of local governments. This will also require business, health, communities, food growers and all levels of government to work together to find local solutions that are sustainable over the long-term."

In Tasmania, only 10% eat the recommended five serves or more of vegetables and 44% eat the recommended two serves of fruit per day<sup>1</sup>. The project aims to change those statistics to help fight against chronic disease in Tasmania. "Everyone should have the opportunity to make choices that allow them to live a long healthy

life, regardless of their income, location, education or background," Mr Lynch said.

<sup>1</sup> Population Health Services, Report on the Tasmanian Population Health Survey, April 2014

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# Youth Mental Health Report Released

Mission Australia's newest publication, the *Youth Mental Health* report, prepared in collaboration with the Black Dog Institute, delivers unique insights from almost 15,000 young Australians aged 15 to 19, and presents data on rates of psychological distress, the concerns that are related to high levels of psychological distress and the help seeking behaviour of young people.

Key findings include:

- 21.2% of young people surveyed met criteria for a probable serious mental illness;
- Females were almost twice as likely as males to be experiencing mental illness – at 26.2% compared to 13.8%;
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents were also more likely to be experiencing mental illness – at 31.8% compared to 20.7%;
- Young people with mental illness were around five times more likely to express serious concerns about depression (57.0% compared to 11.5%) and suicide (35.3% compared to 6.8%).

The report clearly reveals that Australian youth need more support, not less, at a critical point in their transition into adulthood. Key policy recommendations include: targeting mental health in schools through awareness and early intervention programs; promoting peer education and support; reducing stigma that may prevent help-seeking behaviour in young people; and a whole-of-community focus on prevention and early intervention.

To download the report, visit [www.missionaustralia.com.au](http://www.missionaustralia.com.au).



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# New Maps Help Protect our Native Species



Photography courtesy of DPIPWE

*Pultenaea humilis*



Photography courtesy of DPIPWE

*tenanthemum pimeleoides*



Photography courtesy of DPIPWE

*Thelymitra atronitida*

The Department of the Environment released in August more than 1,700 new maps and data that local communities can use to find threatened species in their area.

Threatened Species Commissioner, Gregory Andrews said the maps and data were a valuable resource for local groups and natural resource managers, allowing them to target their conservation efforts. "This information is being made publicly available for the first time. "If we want to protect these plants, mammals, birds, reptiles, frogs and fish from further decline, we need to share our resources with community groups on the ground," Mr Andrews said.



Photography by Clare Hawkins

*Green and Gold Frog*

The maps and data focus on native flora and fauna that are listed under national environment law as vulnerable, endangered and critically endangered. The maps were developed using details from state, territory and national databases, as well as information published in species recovery plans and listing advice. The maps are general enough to ensure threatened plants and wildlife can't be illegally collected or disturbed. Members of the public are encouraged to provide feedback through the website so that the maps can be kept up-to-date.

**The maps can be downloaded from [www.environment.gov.au/science/erin/databases-maps/snes](http://www.environment.gov.au/science/erin/databases-maps/snes).**



Photography by Bill Brown, DPIPWE

*Wedge-tailed Eagle*

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# Climate Change in **FOCUS**

## New Climate Change Adaptation Resources for Local Government

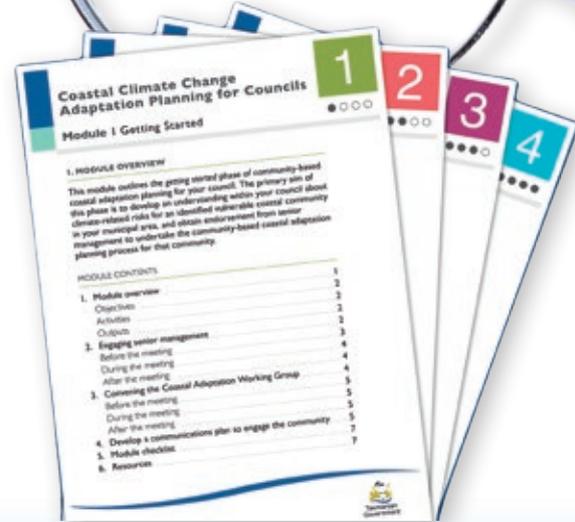
The process of adapting to climate change just became a little easier with the release of a training resource collection that will assist Local Government with corporate and coastal climate change adaptation planning.

Working collaboratively with Local Government, the Tasmanian Government has undertaken a number of adaptation projects in recent years to improve our collective understanding of the risks that climate change poses to infrastructure and assets, and importantly, what adaptation actions could be implemented to reduce those risks. The most significant of those projects have been the Regional Councils Climate Adaptation Project and the Tasmanian Coastal Adaptation Decision Pathways Project. It was from the methodology established by these two projects, that the new training resources have been developed specifically for Local Government.

The collection is made up of eight modules that detail the step-by-step process of adaptation planning. Four modules are dedicated to corporate planning and the remaining four focus on the coastal adaptation planning process.

Each module deals with a different step of the process, from getting started, risk assessment, developing adaptation options/plan and reviewing the options/plan. The modules are accompanied by a suite of useful tools including templates, guides and reading materials that provide Local Government staff with all the resources they need to undertake their adaptation planning.

**The resources and information about the projects are available on the Tasmanian Climate Change Office website at [www.climatechange.tas.gov.au](http://www.climatechange.tas.gov.au).**



### advertiser's index

Advertising Media & Associates.....33, 37, 45	Johnstone McGee & Gandy.....11
Analytical Services Tasmania.....37	Landmark.....BC
Austral Bricks.....39	Marsh.....45
Bell Bay Aluminium.....16	MAV Insurance.....42
Bentley House.....Insert	Nova Design & Print.....40
BIS Industrial Logistics.....IBC	Pitt & Sherry.....15
Brighton City Council.....11	Salamanca Inn.....28
CBA.....44	St Lukes Health.....35
Christie Park Safe.....38	Stornoway.....30
Clenett's Mitre 10.....15	Tasmanian Builder Service.....26
D&L Morrison Machinery.....45	Tasmanian Laboratory Service.....32, 33, 36
Dial Before You Dig.....48	Tasmanian Mountain Waters.....34
Dept of State Growth.....24, 25	Tenderlink.....37, 41
GHD.....26	University of Tasmania.....14
hitSend.....15	Work Safe Tasmania.....17
Hotel Grand Chancellor.....26	Wrest Point.....9
Humes.....IFC	

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# Austral Bricks goes Carbon Neutral

The Australian Government continues to build successful partnerships with industry to cut greenhouse gas emissions, with the certification this month of the first carbon-neutral pavers and bricks.

Austral Bricks Longford operation in Tasmania is the first brick-making facility to receive certification under the Government's voluntary Carbon Neutral Program.

Congratulations to Austral Bricks on becoming a leader in their field.

For businesses, being carbon neutral means looking carefully for ways to reduce energy emissions, which makes good business sense as well as being good for the environment.

It is fantastic to see an ever-expanding range of businesses coming on board to support the programme and setting a new standard within their industries. So

far, more than 30 businesses across Australia have become carbon neutral and many more are in the process of certification.

Austral Bricks has calculated the emissions all the way from the extraction of raw materials and production through to the transportation and disposal of their product and found innovative ways of reducing these emissions.

These include switching some of its kiln operations from coal to gas, as well as improving the energy efficiency of their lighting. The remaining emissions have been offset through the purchase and cancellation of carbon offsets eligible under the Government's National Carbon Offset Standard (NCOS).

Steven Mouzakis, National Energy and Sustainability Manager of Brickworks Building Products, which produces Austral Bricks, said the company is delighted

to have achieved a carbon neutral footprint for its range of brick and paver products manufactured at the Longford facility.

"It sends a very clear message to our customers, business partners and the broader construction industry about our ongoing commitment to deliver sustainable products and processes and to conserve our precious natural resources," said Mr Mouzakis.

The Carbon Neutral Program is a voluntary scheme which certifies products, business operations and events as carbon neutral against the Australian Government's National Carbon Offset Standard.



# FEDERAL FUNDING CUTS BEGIN TO BITE



## The first quarter's payment of vital grants to councils across Australia last month fell short by \$24 million dollars as a result of the Federal Government's Budget cuts.

The decision in the 2014-15 Federal Budget to freeze indexation of the Local Government Financial Assistance Grants will cost Australian councils \$96 million this year, \$200 million next year and more than \$300 million the year after. All councils have been hit, however the greatest impact is expected to be felt by smaller, rural and remote councils which depend most on the grants.

The Financial Assistance Grants, provided each year by the Commonwealth to councils to pay for vital community services and infrastructure, including roads, parks, swimming pools and childcare, are an important part of the Australia's Federal system of government, seeking to ensure that all Australians, wherever they live, enjoy a basic standard of local services and infrastructure.

"These grants are essential for all communities and have been a consistent commitment by all Federal Governments for 40 years, but the decision of the Federal Government in its first Budget to wind back

support will have an impact on every community," said the President of the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA), Mayor Felicity-ann Lewis. "I am very concerned about the implications for services and infrastructure in local communities and these impacts will just get worse as the cumulative impact of the reduction in the grants grows every quarter and every year from now on."

"Councils are trying to work out how to manage their budgets as a result of this decision. Many have already said road maintenance and other vital community services like parks, swimming pools and the library will receive less funding," Mayor Lewis said. "It is important that each council brings home to their local Federal Government representative the real impact of these cuts and the need to reverse this policy."

ALGA has called for the freeze on indexation of the grants to be reversed and for the reduction in grants paid to councils to be restored.



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# TasRail Relocates to Brighton TRANSPORT HUB

**The relocation of TasRail to its purpose-built home at the Brighton Transport Hub represents a major milestone for the municipality.**

With TasRail's relocation, in conjunction with the recent relocation of Toll Transport, the Brighton Transport Hub has truly arrived as the major gateway to Hobart and the rest of the State.

Brighton City Council Mayor Tony Foster said TasRail and Toll's relocation to the Transport Hub were a critical part of the future development of the Brighton municipality, and were integral to Brighton's 2040 vision for the region. "Brighton is an obvious place to build these facilities, with excellent access to all regions throughout the State," Mayor Foster said. "The relocation of TasRail and Toll to the hub are very important developments for our region and we welcome them."

TasRail's relocation will see the company better positioned to grow freight volumes, in addition to providing for the de-commissioning of more than 20 level crossings dotted throughout suburban Hobart.

TasRail CEO, Damien White said the move was a 'win win' for the Tasmanian economy as the company marked the departure of its final Hobart freight service. "This move positions the company to meet the changing demands of the Tasmanian freight market and allows for the expansion of intermodal freight volumes, while at the same time freeing up an important piece of public land for development under the guidance of the Macquarie Point Development Corporation," Mr White said.

Mayor Foster said the Transport Hub is providing much-needed employment for our region and increased prosperity and growth with the associated facilities and services that are now accompanying its development. "This will certainly consolidate Brighton as a regional centre and reaffirm our future planning to that end," he said.



*The TasRail shunting team*

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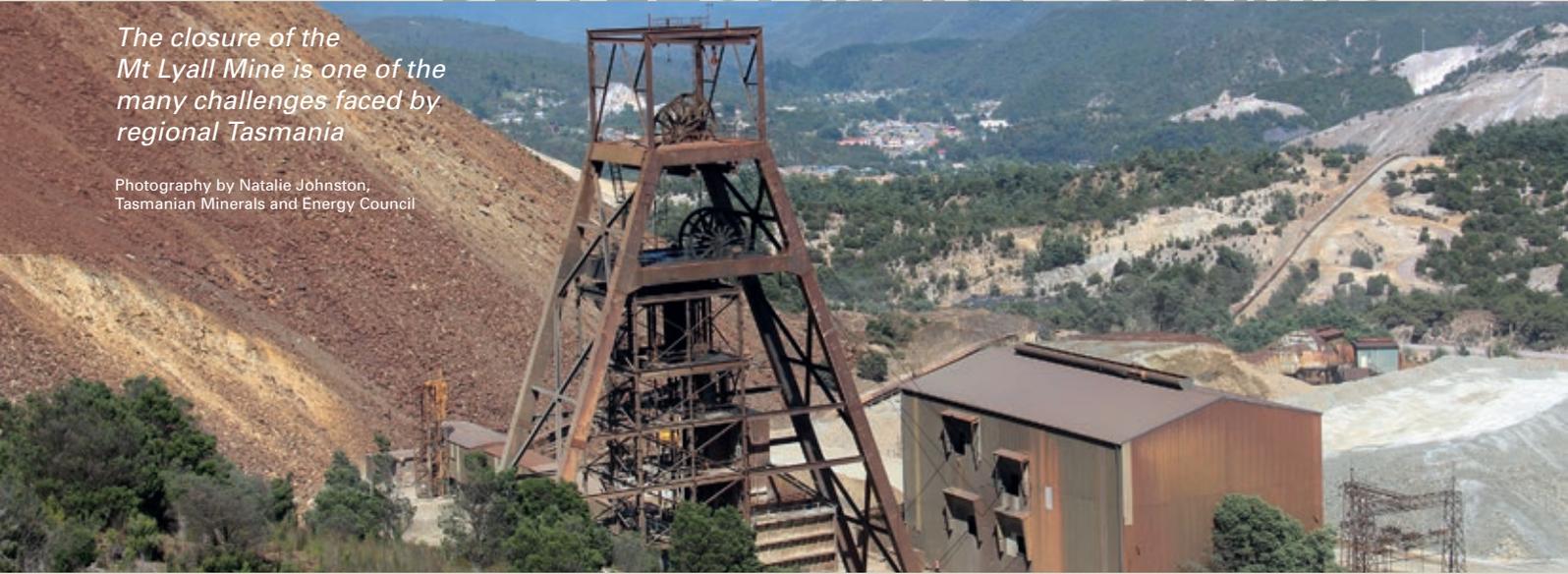
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# REGIONAL COUNCILS PUSH FOR DEVELOPMENT CLAIMS

*The closure of the Mt Lyall Mine is one of the many challenges faced by regional Tasmania*

Photography by Natalie Johnston,  
Tasmanian Minerals and Energy Council



## Tasmania's Regional Councils' Group will continue its campaign to promote development in regional areas and provide new growth opportunities for local communities.

The group met recently to discuss a range of issues of importance to regional councils and their communities including: promoting sustainable development in regional communities and liaising with the State Government as to how this can best be achieved; enhancing relations with the State and Federal Governments; regional health care and placement of nurses and other professionals; the allocation of remaining forest compensation funding; and the impact on regional communities of any possible protest action following the demise of the Tasmanian Forest Agreement legislation.

The group's member councils support Treasurer Peter Gutwein's view that Local Government should lead the development push, particularly in regional areas of our State, and are keen to work with the State Government to promote and support economic development in regional communities.

The group believes that regional development has been neglected in the past and that this was particularly apparent in some of the decisions made regarding the

Tasmanian Forest Agreement, and the subsequent allocation of compensation funding. Regional councils are heartened by the State Government's desire to work with Local Government, particularly in the area of regional economic development.

The group identified the closure of the Mt Lyell mine and the ongoing impacts of the shutdown of the Triabunna woodchip mill as prime examples of the development challenges faced by regional areas, and is keen to work with the State Government to implement a comprehensive regional development strategy and progress other important regional issues.

The Regional Councils' Group now comprises 13 councils including Tasman, Derwent Valley, Break O'Day, Waratah-Wynyard, West Coast, Brighton, Sorell, Huon Valley, Southern Midlands, Dorset, Circular Head, Glamorgan Spring Bay and Central Highlands. Collectively, these councils represent more than 75% of Tasmania's land area, approximately 25% of the State's population, and a major percentage of the State's resources.

## SERVICE DELIVERY REVIEW MANUAL FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Councils in Australia have a new resource to comprehensively assess the services they provide for local communities. *Service Delivery Review: A How to Manual for Local Government*, published by the Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government (ACELG) at UTS, brings together advice, toolkits and templates to help councils, regardless of size, with this critical task.

The manual, intended for department managers, elected members, general managers and community engagement officers, meets an increasing need from the sector for practical guidance in undertaking service

delivery reviews that are consistent with current local governance practice and processes.

According to ACELG Director, Associate Professor Roberta Ryan and co-author of the manual, this is a significant issue for local councils. "Local Government service provision has transformed significantly over recent decades, as well, community expectations of Local Government have increased, while other levels of government have devolved various functions," she said.

**The manual is available online from [www.acelg.org.au](http://www.acelg.org.au).**

# TasNetworks Set to Drive Efficiencies *for Tasmania*



**The formation of TasNetworks, the new company formed through the merger of Transend and Aurora's distribution business, marked an historic day for Tasmania's electricity supply industry, and the conclusion of a significant program of work.**

TasNetworks CEO, Lance Balcombe said TasNetworks will strive to reduce power bills for all Tasmanians. "We will focus on providing outstanding customer service and drive efficiencies to reduce costs, delivering savings for the people of Tasmania," he said.

A public education campaign has been running to alert Tasmanian households that issues with the power supply such as power outages or electrical faults now need to be reported to TasNetworks on 13 2004.

The formation of TasNetworks is the final step in implementing the recommendations put forward by the Expert Panel Review into the electricity sector in Tasmania, conducted in 2012. The full program has included the transfer of the Tamar Valley Gas Power plant from Aurora Energy to Hydro Tasmania, launching Aurora Energy as a stand-alone retailer in a fully contestable market, and merging Aurora's distribution business with Transend to form TasNetworks. Transend has now ceased operating.

## TasNetworks Contact Details

For recorded information about current outages, or to report electrical emergencies and power outages, call 13 2004 (24 hours).

Outage information is also available on the TasNetworks twitter feed: @TasNetworks

For enquiries about connections to new premises, call 1300 137 008.

Customer feedback and general enquiries, call 1800 060 399.

Queries regarding electricity bills should be directed to Aurora.

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# Roads to Recovery Funding Decision Welcomed

The President of the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA), Mayor Felicity-ann Lewis has welcomed the passing of legislation in the Senate to extend Roads to Recovery to 2019 but has called for the funding to be made permanent to avoid a repeat of this year's political impasse in the Senate.

The Roads to Recovery funding legislation has been caught up in debate of the *Land Transport Infrastructure Amendment Bill 2014* which originally passed the House of Representatives in March. Since then, ALGA has been given a number of assurances from both the Government and the Opposition that the Roads to Recovery funds would not be impacted by the actions of either party.

However, politics surrounding the *Land Transport Infrastructure Amendment Bill 2014* had prevented the legislation from passing the Senate until 28 August, five months after it was first considered in Parliament. The legislation for the program expired on 30 June, leaving councils not knowing if these vital road funds would be forthcoming. In the May 2014 Budget, \$350 million was committed to Roads to Recovery per year until 2019,



*Federal Government commitment is needed for a permanent Roads to Recovery program to guarantee vital roads funding for Local Government*

with a doubling of funds for 2015-16, but this funding was held hostage while issues completely unrelated to the Roads to Recovery program were debated.

"Councils and their communities across Australia have been left in a state of uncertainty for months as the major political parties failed to resolve their differences on matters unrelated to Roads to Recovery," Mayor Lewis said. "The only way to avoid a repeat of this situation is to make the program permanent and give Local Government a guaranteed Roads to Recovery program," she said.

# Flinders Wooden Bridge Replacement Program Complete

Flinders Council announced the completion of its wooden bridge replacement program on 11 July.

Mayor Carol Cox said at a time when rural municipalities across Australia are struggling to fund bridge replacement programs, it's heartening to see the island's own long-term bridge replacement program finally completed.

Some 30 wooden bridges have now been replaced with precast concrete constructions, built by a local manufacturer. Flinders Council instigated the project some 16 years ago with one or two bridges being replaced each year, to a schedule set through bridge condition assessments and strategic importance.

"The project is a great example of how even small councils with minimal revenue can set long-term strategies for asset replacement and methodically deliver improvements over many years for our communities," Mayor Cox said. "This bridge replacement program will benefit transport operators and all road users, enabling economic development, and improving the safety of our roads for residents and tourists alike."

While Flinders Council has self-funded the majority of the bridge replacement program, the island received significant funding support from the Federal Government through the Roads to Recovery Program from 2009 through to 2014.



*(L-R) Andrew Nikolic, Federal Member for Bass and Flinders Council Mayor Carol Cox at the completion of Council's wooden bridge replacement program*

"Roads to Recovery and the Federal Assistance Grants programs are critical support mechanisms for remote communities such as ours," Mayor Cox said. "Without them, our ability to fund key infrastructure projects such as bridge replacement programs and road upgrades would be very difficult."

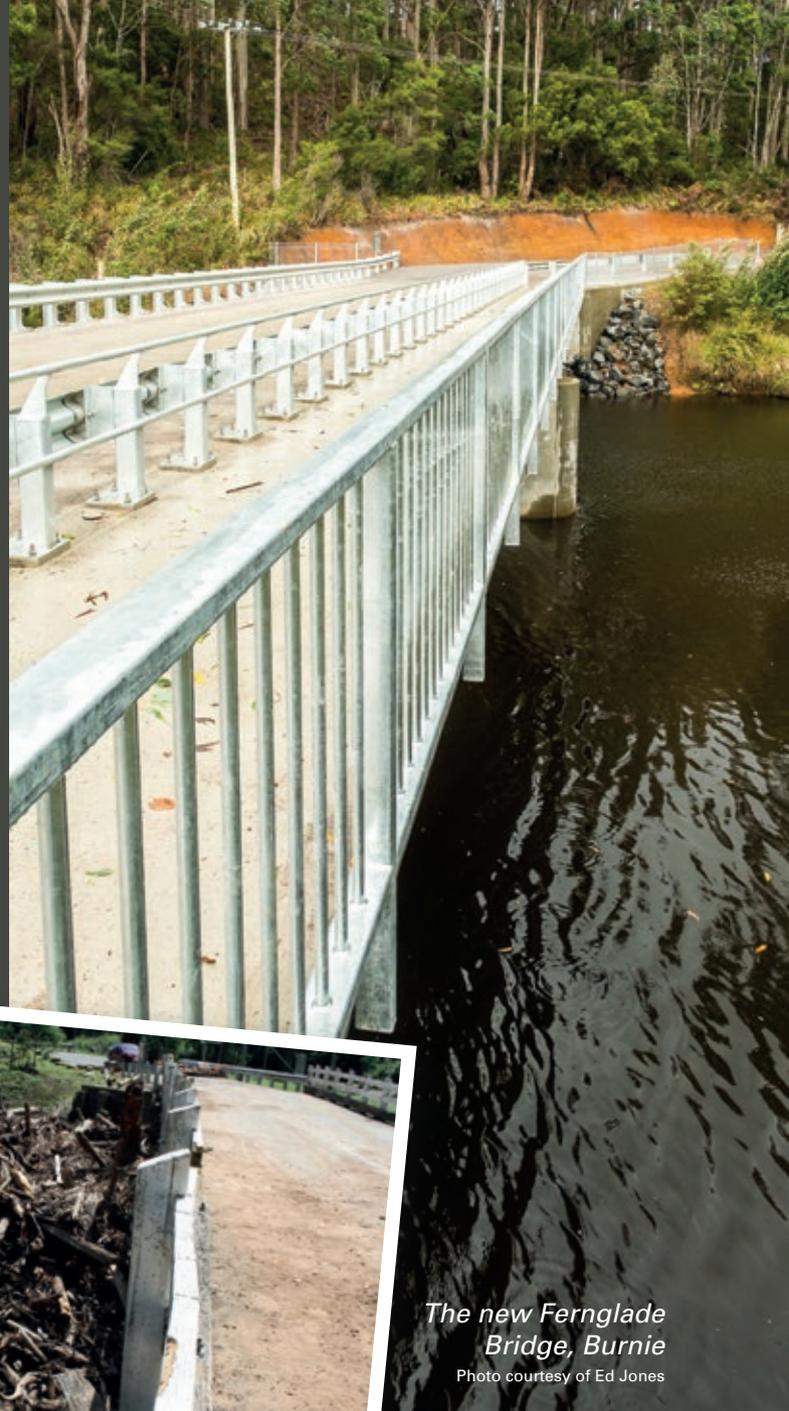
# New Bridge Opened in Burnie

Fernglade Road, situated in the Burnie Municipal Area, has a new bridge which is now open to vehicular and pedestrian access. The \$1 million bridge, fully funded by Burnie City Council, is a two span, single lane, concrete structure with a shared pedestrian/cycle pathway to facilitate safe access to and from Fernglade Reserve, a popular spot for visitors to the area.

Burnie City Council Mayor Steve Kons said the bridge project has been completed on schedule and budget by VEC Civil Engineering on behalf of Council. "The former timber bridge had a restricted load limit on it for several years and had reached the end of its service life," he said. "The new bridge now allows for heavier loads to utilise it, including school and tour buses."

The previous bridge was constructed in 1974 and had a new concrete deck installed 20 years ago. In January 2011, the structure was badly damaged by timber debris which lodged under the bridge during severe flooding and storms, forcing its closure for a short period. When re-opened, the load limit was restricted to vehicles weighing under 10 tonne. The original bridge at that location dates back to 1929.

*Damage to the previous Fernglade Bridge during severe weather conditions in 2011 caused its temporary closure and the need for reduced load limits thereafter*



*The new Fernglade Bridge, Burnie*  
Photo courtesy of Ed Jones

## Pitt & Sherry Wins Prestigious Tasmanian Awards

Engineering consultancy Pitt & Sherry was recently the winner of two prestigious Tasmanian engineering awards.

Pitt & Sherry received the 2014 Tasmanian Spatial Excellence Award for ClimateAsyst®, a publicly accessible, simple-to-use, web-based tool that allows the operator to identify and select the relevant Climate Futures for Tasmanian Climate Variables and see how the projected future climate may impact current or future assets. ClimateAsyst® is a climate change analysis assessment and communication tool that can be used by State and Local Government, emergency services and the general public to incorporate consideration of climate change in the management

and planning of current and future infrastructure, the environment and its natural resources.

Meanwhile, Pitt & Sherry, along with project partners Hazell Brothers and the Tasmanian Department of State Growth, was the recipient of a Tasmanian Earth Award for the Tarkine Forest Drive project. Pitt & Sherry undertook concept design and contract documentation, and led the environmental approvals process for the environmentally sensitive project in the Tarkine wilderness.

Pitt & Sherry is a leading, multi-specialist infrastructure consultancy, delivering intelligent and sustainable solutions to industry, government and communities for over 50 years.

# Smithton Wharf an Asset for the Circular Head Community



## With State Government support, the north-west town of Smithton has replaced the original wharf which had become unsafe

Circular Head Council, along with the Minister for Infrastructure, Hon Rene Hidding MP and members of the local community celebrated the official opening of the new, \$1 million Smithton Wharf on 14 August. The new, 76-metre public wharf features bridge access, lighting and service infrastructure, along with fire cabinets and waste disposal, providing improved facilities for the local fishing industry, and redefining Smithton's foreshore.

The project is a joint venture between the State Government and Circular Head Council, and its construction was carried out by TasSpan Civil Constructing, of Latrobe.

In 2008, the original wharf, which was then owned by TasPorts, was deemed to be unsafe and unsound, and was fenced off, with public access prohibited. The Smithton Wharf Reference Group was formed, with a major focus on consulting with users and the wider community on the redevelopment of the area. TasPorts transferred ownership of the wharf to the Council and provided a financial contribution to assist in remedial works, while \$1 million was allocated by the State Government.



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#### Contact Details

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#### Technical Data

Bis Industries holds quality certification to AS/NZS ISO9001:2000, AS/NZS ISO 4801:2001 for Occupational Health & Safety Management and AS/ NZS ISO 14001:2004 for Environmental Management for its quarrying operations in Tasmania.

Bis Industries produces materials using Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) from these Australian Standards which will assist our clientele with achieving compliance with the Department of Infrastructure Energy and Resources (DIER) standard specifications. The Tasmanian Quarry operations has just achieved an LTI record exceeding 13 years across all business units with the entire Tasmanian region achieving 10 years LTI free this year.

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