



LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION OF TASMANIA

YEAR IN REVIEW 2019-2020



OUR VISION



Vibrant Tasmanian communities.

OUR MISSION



Help Tasmanian councils be the best they can be for their communities.

OUR VALUES



Ethics, impartiality, respectfulness, accountability, commitment, creativity.

OUR CORE PURPOSES



Protect and represent the interests and rights of councils in Tasmania.

Promote an efficient and effective system of Local Government in Tasmania.

Provide services to Members, councillors and employees of councils.

It is fair to say that 2019-2020 was not quite the year that LGAT, or any of us, had planned! Like many organisations, LGAT was forced to quickly shift our focus and priorities as we supported our Members in response to Covid-19.

During Covid-19 LGAT worked quickly to assist councils to adjust their processes, providing advice on how to respond to public health directions and business requirements. We supported the prompt development of Pandemic and Business Continuity plans and distributed critical information, including updates from the State Covid-19 Public Information Unit and daily updates from the Premier. We produced and distributed guidelines about remote meetings and resuming face to face meetings, developed a model hardship policy, an application form and commercial addendum, and collected data to support advocacy including to the Federal and State Governments and the Premiers Economic and Social Advisory Council. LGAT's Covid-19 webpage provided a central hub about not only what LGAT was doing but a regularly updated overview of council relief measures.

In addition to navigating the increased workload and a shift to working at home as a result of the pandemic, the LGAT team continued to lead a strong advocacy and policy agenda during 2019-2020. The Tasmanian Government's Draft Waste Action Plan was released after years of LGAT advocacy and included the commitment to establish a state-wide waste levy and introduce a container refund scheme.

Persistent advocacy on emergency management saw the appointment of three regional planners by the State Emergency Service to support Local Government Municipal Committees. Additionally, LGAT developed the Municipal Emergency Management Guidelines and supporting videos.

The success of the LGAT Community Health and Wellbeing Project which was due to conclude in June, led to the Department of Health offering funding for a further two years. This Project has provided opportunities to share examples of the outstanding work of council officers across Tasmania.

LGAT Procurement continued to expand offerings and to work closely with councils and suppliers. The total estimated savings for Members for the 12 months to end March 2020 was over \$2.5 million - a 125% increase in savings compared to last year, and more than double what Members paid in subscriptions for LGAT. Councils also saved approximately \$819,000 on public lighting following LGAT's contract renewal coordination.

While we sadly had to cancel our 2020 LGAT Annual Conference due to the pandemic, up until March 2020 LGAT delivered a range of successful face-to-face events. This included our 2019 Annual Conference; Elected Member Weekend, Mayors' and General Managers' Workshops, a stakeholder thank you event and our International Women's Day awards lunch. LGAT pivoted in response to Covid-19, moving to delivering events online, finishing the financial year with a webinar titled "Leading in the time of a Pandemic", which included a special address by the Premier.

To support elected members and council officers in managing their social media presence, LGAT developed a new series of online resources and delivered a series of regional training workshops. The last 12 months also saw the updating of the Tasmanian Municipal Standard Drawings and the addition of a complementary written specification as well as further development of other tools and templates such the Workplace Behaviours Toolkit and model employment contracts.

LGAT continues to keep Members updated and build understanding of councils' roles and their great work through our in-house publications such as Pulse and LGTas, our website and social media and through our interactions with the broader media including through media releases, opinion pieces and interviews.

As a numeric snapshot of the day-to-day work the LGAT team has delivered over 2019-2020; LGAT staff advocated through meetings, submissions and letters 172 times; delivered 70 events and training opportunities; issued 110 publications, media releases, letters to the editor and opinion pieces; had over 2000 social media impressions; and participated in over 400 stakeholder engagement activities!

I would like to thank all LGAT staff and our General Management Committee for delivering an extraordinary amount of work for our sector during challenging times and giving our Members excellent value for their subscriptions. I also want to acknowledge and thank all the hard working elected members and officers across the Local Government sector for your support and collaboration with LGAT during a challenging year

Mayor Christina Holmdahl
PRESIDENT



Christina Holmdahl

After the challenges that came at the end of this financial year, I am pleased to be focusing on what lies ahead for LGAT for 2020-2021.

Of course, we will still be grappling with the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic so significant emphasis will be on community recovery, and we will prioritise supporting Members to begin the recovery process as organisations and as community leaders. We know that all councils and communities will be impacted differently and have different pathways to recovery and they will therefore have to advocate for and deliver programs which are flexible and appropriate to place.

LGAT's first submission to the Premier's Economic and Social Recovery Advisory Council (PESRAC) stressed the need for community led recovery. It highlighted that Tasmanian councils have already made significant financial and human resource investment in responding to Covid-19; valued at over \$40 million. Councils' initial focus was on community and staff health and wellbeing and delivery of essential services. We are now seeing financial impacts, through lost revenues, implementation of relief measures, increased cleaning costs and loss of TasWater dividends. Moving into 2020-21 we will articulate a plan for councils and communities to recover, build resilience and reinvent and engage with Members, PESRAC, the State Government and other industry groups on that plan.

Like our member councils, LGAT too was impacted by Covid-19, particularly in relation to our events and training services. The cancellation of our 2020 LGAT Annual Conference, will affect our 2020-21 budget. However, recognising the financial situation across our sector, there will be no overall increase to subscriptions for Members in 2020-21. Already we are working to deliver a range of professional development experiences for Members including the 2021 Annual Conference.

With the General Management Committee, we have identified our key priorities (advocacy, services and training) for the year ahead.

These include continuing to lead the waste and resource recovery reform agenda. LGAT will continue to advocate for implementation of the recommendations in the feasibility study into State-wide waste arrangements, participate in the development and implementation of the container refund scheme and state-wide waste levy and ensure appropriate implementation of the Waste Action Plan initiatives from a Local Government perspective.

We will be engaging strongly with councils through the next critical stages of Local Government Legislative Reform. We look forward to the findings of our engagement work around 21st Century Councils and to determining the next steps collectively with our Members.

We will also support council's infrastructure planning with asset management training and continue to work with key stakeholders to map deficiencies in the stormwater planning and regulatory environment and advocate for necessary changes.

We will be watching closely, the State Government's "red tape reduction" reform process as well as the ongoing land use planning reform activity and as always seek to increase the focus on meaningful and strategic change that is cognizant of the interests of all stakeholders, the impact on communities and the practical realities of implementation for councils.

The additional funding awarded to LGAT's Community Health and Wellbeing Project will enable us to further develop skills and tools, ensuring councils can effectively respond to health issues in their communities. We will also be working to address a critical skills shortage in the Environmental Health Officer Workforce.

There will be further expansion of LGAT Procurement and collaboration with the National Procurement Network and Members to develop and implement improved procurement practices. Over 2019-20 LGAT Procurement saved Members over \$2.5 million dollars and we anticipate this will be exceeded in 2020-21.

Often it is small incremental advocacy wins that make a difference. Our relationship building with key stakeholders, often over many years, enables our Members voices' to be heard and acted on. Our strong reputation of delivering quality policy advice, submissions and reports means our input is valued. I am proud that my dedicated team of staff consistently works hard for our Members, and I would like to thank them for this. I would also like to thank our General Management Committee for their ongoing support and especially thank our President, Mayor Christina Holmdahl.

Dr Katrena Stephenson
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



Katrena Stephenson

The Local Government Association of Tasmania (LGAT) is Tasmania's peak body for Local Government representing all 29 Tasmanian councils. LGAT works to protect the interests and rights of councils, to promote the efficient operation of Local Government, to foster strategic and collaborative relationships and to promote the positive role Tasmanian councils play in our communities.

Our work frequently involves [advocacy and engagement](#) with State and Federal Governments on legislative and policy issues impacting and managed by councils as well as promoting the positive work councils deliver for their communities. LGAT also supports and develops Members through professional development, events and training opportunities.

GENERAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The General Management Committee (GMC) of eight Members provides oversight to LGAT operations. The GMC is elected by LGAT Members every two years. It comprises the popularly elected President, the Lord Mayor and six other Members elected by regional groupings of councils. The Vice President is elected by the GMC.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The Strategic Plan 2017-2021 provides the overview for the direction of the Association for this planning period, it forms the basis on which this work plan is developed. The Strategic Plan contains five key focus areas for the 2017 to 2021 period, they are:

- Facilitating change across Local Government;
- Building Local Government's reputation;
- Fostering collaboration;
- Promoting financial sustainability; and
- Underpinning Local Government capacity and capability to deliver.

Mayor Christina Holmdahl

President from July 2019
Elected to GMC July 2015

Mayor Ben Shaw

Southern Region
Elected July 2019
Vice President from July 2019

Mayor Daryl Quilliam

West - North West Region
Re-Elected July 2019
Elected to GMC July 2012

Mayor Annette Rockliff

West - North West Region
Elected to GMC July 2019

Councillor Geoff Lyons

Northern Region
Elected to GMC July 2019

Mayor Mick Tucker

Northern Region
Re-elected Jul 2019
Elected to GMC Jul 2017

Alderman Brendan Blomeley

Southern Region
Elected to GMC July 2019

Lord Mayor Anna Reynolds

As of Right Position
Commenced July 2019

KEY PRIORITIES FOR 2019-2020:

1. Lead the waste management reform agenda
2. Deliver the 21st Century Project
3. Support councils in implementing the planning reform agenda
4. Continue to expand the procurement program
5. Support councils' health and wellbeing outcomes through the Health & Wellbeing Project
6. Support the sector through the next stages of Local Government legislative reform
7. Deliver equitable rating outcomes through securing legislative amendments
8. Work with councils and stakeholders to address workforce capacity gaps.

More detail can be found in the [LGAT Annual Plan](#).



WASTE



LGAT's ongoing advocacy ensured that the State Government committed to the establishment of a state-wide waste levy in 2021 and the introduction of a container refund scheme by 2022. One of the key missing pieces required to support improved resource recovery in Tasmania is a dedicated statewide waste body. LGAT led the development of a proposal for a joint state and Local Government owned entity to fulfil this role. This proposal was endorsed by Members and LGAT is currently advocating for the State Government to adopt this model.

[Find out more here.](#)

PLANNING



LGAT has a strong reputation when it comes to land-use planning and over this year we maintained our pressure on the Government to place a greater focus on the strategic end of our planning system. In addition, LGAT delivered Planning Authority Training to a number of councils and also individual Elected Representatives and new General Managers. Previously councils would have to engage a consultant planner or lawyer to undertake this training, however in recent years LGAT has successfully delivered it at no cost as a member benefit.

[Find out more here.](#)

21ST CENTURY COUNCILS



LGAT delivered two significant milestones as part of the the 21st Century Council Project; our sector led investigation into the future of the Tasmanian Local Government sector. LGAT published the '21st Century Councils - Structural Reform Discussion Paper' providing an analysis of the history of work done in relation to Local Government reform in Tasmanian and nationally. LGAT also delivered significant member engagement through 'roundtable conversations', looking at Local Government's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The final background piece comprising one on one targeted interviews with key external stakeholders, was recently completed and LGAT is in the processes of analysing the results. Already this work has proven very useful for LGAT's engagement with PESRAC and it is expected that it will also provide important context for any future reform discussions with the State Government.

[Find out more here.](#)

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT



The Municipal Emergency Management Guidelines were published with supporting videos. These will assist Municipal Emergency Management Committees in undertaking their roles and followed strong advocacy for the appointment of three regional planners by the SES to support the Municipal Committees.

[Find out more here.](#)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT
LEGISLATIVE REFORM



Through representation on the Steering Committee and via submissions, LGAT had strong input into the State Government's Directions for the Review of Tasmania's Local Government Legislation Framework and emphasised the need for a flexible, innovative and future-focussed legislative framework and ongoing and detailed engagement with the sector. LGAT's advocacy saw amendments to some of the directions originally proposed.

[Find out more here.](#)



CHARITABLE RATES



LGAT established a Steering Committee and Working Group to support progression of an amendment to restore equity in the rating independent living units. Following strong engagement with key peak bodies some agreed principles were developed, along with proposed legislative changes for consultation. LGAT continues to engage with the State Government and key stakeholders on this issue.

COASTAL HAZARDS



LGAT successfully advocated to the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment (DPIPWE) for public release of its principles for managing coastal hazards. Release of these principles has allowed councils to better communicate to affected property owners the details of the State Government's current stance on how coastal hazards should be managed and forms a platform for future advocacy.

COVID-19 AND COMMUNITY RECOVERY



LGAT provided significant and varied support, advice and tools to Members for their response to Covid-19. LGAT coordinated General Meeting resolutions for sectoral in principle support of a 0% rate increase, no penalties, fees or charges, rent relief, and a common approach to hardship policies. Additionally, LGAT advocated around impacts, funding and the Local Government role in recovery including through two submissions to PESRAC.

[Find out more here.](#)

HEAVY VEHICLES



LGAT continued its very effective work in heavy vehicle policy and regulation, collaborating with other State Local Government associations to successfully advocate for recognition of the local road manager's role in overall road network outcomes to the National Transport Commission's (Heavy Vehicle National Law) review. LGAT also continued its strong partnership with the Tasmanian Government, further developing and promoting our State's nation leading heavy vehicle access conditions.

[Find out more here.](#)

PARTNERSHIPS & PROJECTS



- LGAT's [Community Health and Wellbeing Project](#) developed case studies, based on the work of council Health and Wellbeing Officers, in order to build shared knowledge of their practice and hosted Health and Wellbeing Forums (Hobart and Devonport).
- LGAT surveyed Members and facilitated discussion with the Minister for Mayors and LGAT's General Management Committee regarding online bullying and harassment of councillors. Subsequently targeted training and resources were made available to Members.
- The LGAT 2020 Performance and Improvement Survey showed improvements in satisfaction from Members across the areas of advocacy, policy development, engagement, procurement, and training.
- The [Tasmanian Environmental Health Officer Workforce Development Project](#), which aims to address a critical skills shortage, undertook stakeholder consultations and reporting with initial findings strongly supported by councils.



SECTOR SAVINGS: PROCUREMENT AND ENERGY



- \$2.5 million total member savings via [LGAT Procurement](#).
- The total savings made by Members through using LGAT procurement equated to more than double what was paid in subscriptions to LGAT.
- Councils saved approximately \$819,000 on public lighting during the 2019/20 financial year.

[Find out more here.](#)

COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLICATIONS:



- [Media Releases](#) (18)
- Opinion Editorials (2)
- A message from Local Government Advertorial
- Media queries
- Letters to the Editor (1)
- [Pulse Monthly Newsletter](#) (11)
- [LG Tas \(September 2019, June 2020\)](#)
- [LGAT Year in Review](#)
- [LG Noticeboard](#)
- Magazine Articles (1)
- Twitter and LinkedIn
- Transitioned to new website platform

EVENTS & TRAINING



- General Meetings
- ALGA Board Meetings
- LGAT Life Member Awards
- LGAT Annual General Meeting
- International Women's Day Awards lunch
- Storytelling for Leaders with TASCOS
- Workshops with Members on data access and analysis with AURIN
- National Street Lighting Webinar
- LGBTI Relations and Service Delivery Workshop for Members
- Elected members Weekend in Launceston
- Procurement Staff Vendor Panel Training
- Elected members Weekend Training 2020
- Food and Waste Hub Forum
- Community Health and Wellbeing Project Forums
- Skype sessions for new councillors
- 107th LGAT Annual Conference
- LGAT webinar - 'Leading in the time of a Pandemic'.
- LGAT Stakeholder event.
- Mayors Professional Development Weekend
- General Managers' Workshops

[Find out more about LGAT Events and Training here.](#)

TOOLS AND TEMPLATES



The following new tools and templates were provided to Member:

- Additions to the Workplace Behaviours Toolkit, including a significant update to the model employment contracts which are extensively used by councils.
- Online social media guidance and resources for elected members and council officers designed to assist navigating the online platforms (supported through a series of regional training workshops)
- Updating of the Tasmanian Municipal Standard Drawings and the addition of a complementary written specification both available on LGAT Website.
- Model hardship policy with commercial addendum in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Guide to remote meetings and Covid-19 safe plans for council meetings.

[Access Tools and Templates via our Member Extranet.](#)



LOCAL GOVERNMENT
IN TASMANIA
SECTOR BY THE NUMBERS
2019-2020

SERVICING
40,000
BUSINESSES



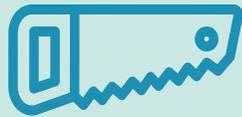
Supporting
232,890
Households



PROVIDING WASTE MANAGEMENT & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES



\$94.9m



Provided
1744
construction jobs



Employing over **3350** Tasmanians (FTE)

OFFERING

390



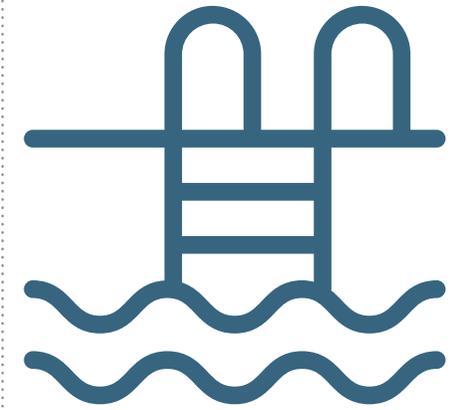
CAREER CHOICES
(OCCUPATIONS)

Delivering
Planning &
Community
Amenities

\$56.4m



SUPPORTING
RECREATION
& CULTURE



\$126.2m

CREATED
1153



INDIRECT JOBS FROM
INFRASTRUCTURE
INVESTMENT

Providing
community
relief in the
first 6 months
of Covid-19

\$40m



\$389.5m

SUPPORTING
INFRASTRUCTURE
INVESTMENT
2019



Multiplier effect of
Local Government
infrastructure investment
to Tasmanian economy

\$193m

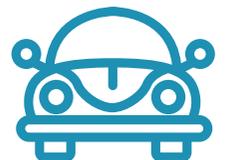


SUPPORTING
HOUSING
& WELFARE

\$25.9m



Maintain
14,211km
of local roads



\$11.5 billion

OWN & MAINTAIN INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS

