



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

21 January 2014

Leave Local Government Out Of State Government Election

The constant beating of the Local Government Reform drum is tiresome and counter-productive, Local Government Association of Tasmania President, Mayor Barry Easter. said today.

“There are enough issues for the community to ponder about the way State Government services and functions operate without trying to confuse the issue by bringing Local Government into the State election debate.”

“Councils are not manifestations of themselves – they exist to represent local communities and to ensure that the interests and service provision to those communities is provided and maintained.”

“Councils do not simply exist to hinder business and developers. Local Government has a range of statutory functions that are derived from State legislation. It is the role of Local Government to administer and uphold these regulations and rules to ensure that the health, well-being and amenity of the whole community are well served.”

“If there are problems with the legislation or the system then perhaps that needs to be fixed rather than creating a massive upheaval that would result from structural reform of Local Government.”

Local Government is the heart of many communities and when there is a downturn in a particular area through business closure or industry restructuring, it is the local council on the front line looking to assist and support those in the community that have lost jobs and livelihoods. Councils play a major role in facilitating business start-ups and investment attraction.

Of course there are rules by which developers must abide but that is not intended to hamper business but to clearly enunciate what is acceptable to the broader community of interest.

As for claims of inefficiency in the management of roads and other infrastructure, there is simply no argument to demonstrate that fewer councils would deliver better outcomes or indeed that the current arrangements are not delivering the best outcomes for local communities.

“This selfish, self serving drive by a small component of the business sector is unfortunate and counterproductive. At a time when the state needs all sectors to be working together it is a pity that the knockers can’t see their way clear to work together with Local Government to address issues rather than trying to destroy its very foundations at every opportunity”, said Mayor Easter

“Councils have embraced planning reform and water and sewerage reform and undertaken significant internal asset management and financial reforms in the past 5 years. Local Government does not fear reform but it would prefer to work collaboratively on problems that actually exist rather than beat ups prompted by self interested lobby groups.”

**For media enquiries, please contact
LGAT President, Mayor Barry Easter
on 0408 334 936.**