



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, 23 June 2015

BIG Thinking the Focus as Local Government Meets to Plan for the Future

BIG Thinking is the theme of the Local Government Association of Tasmania's 103rd Annual Conference, to be held at The Tramsheds in Launceston, from 22-24 July 2015, the first time in northern Tasmania since 2008.

The conference comes at a time of unprecedented change for the Association, with the sad and untimely loss of President Barry Jarvis just a few weeks ago, and the recent appointment of the new CEO for LGAT, Dr Katrena Stephenson this month. It will also be the first Local Government Conference for dozens of newly elected aldermen and councillors.

Former ABC Radio talkback host, Tim Cox, will MC the event and delegates will hear from highly regarded Tasmanian, national and international speakers on a range of topics in plenary presentations and workshops.

On Thursday, 23 July, ecological sustainability practitioner, Ian McBurney, will explore the many changes society faces that will affect everything from transport to energy, building design to communication, and how councils can adapt to these changes and remain relevant to the communities they serve.

Associate Professor Roberta Ryan, Director of the Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government, will present the findings of the first ever Australian survey of community attitudes to Local Government. Two thousand Australians participated in the survey which provides real evidence on which the sector can begin to have informed discussion.

On Friday, 24 July, former Christchurch Mayor, Sir Bob Parker, will present his experience of the politics and process of change in Local Government, and the leadership challenges he faced during the catastrophic 2010-2011 earthquakes.

Mayor Brad Pettitt of the City Fremantle will outline his experience following the Western Australian State Government announcement that it would undertake the largest reform of Local Government in a generation, only to walk away from that process earlier this year, just months before the new structure was to be implemented.

The workshops will cover topics including: transforming empty places into creative spaces; facilitating private and social sector partnerships; redefining age-friendly communities; and managing and reshaping organisational capacity.

Highlights of the program include a presentation by the Minister for Planning and Local Government, the Hon Peter Gutwein MP, from 11.30am on 22 July, during the General Meeting.

From 11.15am, on 23 July, the winners of the 2015 Local Government Awards for Excellence will be announced in two categories: *Delivering Excellence – Smaller Councils (populations under 10,000)* and *Delivering Excellence – Larger Councils (populations over 10,000)*.

The official Conference Dinner, sponsored by MAV Insurance, will take place at the Hotel Grand Chancellor Launceston on 23 July, and a large Trade Exhibition will be held at The Tramsheds throughout the conference, featuring the latest goods and services available to Local Government from around the country.

For a copy of the Conference Program and Registration Form, please visit the LGAT website at www.lgat.tas.gov.au, or phone (03) 6233 5966.

Ends...

Note: Registration is free for media representatives.

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