



Media Release

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100 Years Long: 100 Years Strong **Local Government Association of Tasmania** **Celebrates Centenary**

The strength, resilience and solidarity of Tasmanian councils over the past 100 years will be celebrated when the Local Government Association of Tasmania (LGAT) marks its centenary at this year's Local Government Conference and AGM at Wrest Point in Hobart, from 20-22 July. Almost two hundred elected members, council general managers and officers from around the State will come together in Hobart to recognise and celebrate the way in which Local Government in Tasmania has evolved over the past century and at where the sector is headed for the future.

LGAT President, Mayor Barry Easther said the conference theme, *100 Years Long: 100 Years Strong*, not only recognised the Association's own history, but also paid tribute to the endurance and ability of local councils to adapt to significant change.

"There's no denying that there is strength in numbers and, over the past century, Tasmanian councils have continued to benefit from the capacity and unity that has been made possible as members of the Association," Mayor Easther said.

"Together we have faced all manner of challenges and have enjoyed some victories along the way, as the Association has continued to represent the sector's best interests and provide a united voice for Local Government."

Mayor Easther said speakers at this year's conference would not only explore how far councils had come, but would also delve into the future challenges, trends and influences that lay ahead.

"The conference will address pertinent issues facing Tasmanian councils today, such as harnessing the power of social media, disaster management, recruitment, effective performance management and policy development," Mayor Easther said. "It will also provide a valuable opportunity for delegates to learn from each other as we share our experiences and ideas in moving forward."

Keynote speakers and workshop presenters for this year's program include:

- **Ross Dawson – *Creating the Future of Local Government***
Demographic shifts, heightened expectations and massive connectivity are transforming business and society, shaping a new landscape for Local Government. Today people increasingly expect open, participatory government. There is an opportunity for communities to be better served, even with limited resources, by adapting to powerful changes in the environment and bringing together the ideas and energy of residents. The steps required to fulfil the promise of the future of Local Government are challenging, yet achievable.

- **Jacky Hodges – *Census: 100 Years in Tasmania***
 2011 marks 100 years since the first national Census was conducted in Australia and today, the Census of Population and Housing remains Australia’s best source of local level data. Jacky will reflect on how Tasmania has changed over this time, as seen through the Census, offering insights into how Local Government can gain more from Census data to support local communities into the future.
- **Ricky Langford – *Worker Health is Your Business!***
 Research has revealed when health and wellness is managed well, organisational performance increases more than 2.5 times, however, when these areas are not managed well, performance decreases more than 3.5 times. The number of health risks employees have impacts on absenteeism and their ability to cope with the changing work environment. Councils have a valuable opportunity to assist their employees to prevent and manage their health risks through an effective workplace health program.
- **Peter Williams – *Social Media and Local Government***
 The phenomenon of social media is demanding attention from many organisations, including Local Government, but governments have typically been cautious in using it. What is being said about your council on social media platforms and what are the opportunities and threats?
- **Anne Leadbeater – *Black Saturday 2009: Collaboration and Partnerships in the ‘Post Bushfire’ Environment***
 On 7 February 2009, the rural Victorian municipality of Murrindindi was decimated by bushfires. With 40 per cent of the Shire’s land area burnt, the loss of 95 lives and the destruction of community facilities, businesses and more than 1,200 homes, the devastating effect of the fires exceeded all previous experience and planning.

This year also marks the 60th anniversary of the Australian Local Government Women’s Association (ALGWA), which will be celebrated with a reception at Government House, to recognise the support ALGWA has provided to women elected to and working in the Local Government sector.

The Conference Dinner, to be held at the Hobart Function Centre on Thursday, 21 July, will be a highlight of the event, featuring the announcement of winners of the Council History Award and the inaugural Life Members Award for Meritorious Service. Entertainment will be provided by Cary Lewincamp, Island Fire, and dance band Manhattan.

The winners of the Local Government Awards for Excellence will be announced at 11.30am on Friday, 22 July by Local Government Minister Bryan Green MP following his plenary address. Awards will be presented in three categories to councils for initiatives which are delivering a positive result for their community and which demonstrate leading management practice.

The conference will also feature a large trade exhibition with 40 exhibitors from across the nation.

The Annual General Meeting will kick off at 11.00am on Wednesday, 20 July, followed by the General Meeting.

Ends....

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**Conference program attached.*