

Focus

July 2010



LOCAL
GOVERNMENT
MANAGERS
AUSTRALIA
Tasmania

President's Report

I would like to thank the 67 people who contributed to the Board's recent member survey, and not forgetting the 13 non-members who made the effort to provide feedback on what we offer. The survey results will shortly be available on the LGMA Tasmania web site for members to review.

The survey results were hot off the press for our 25 June 2010 Board meeting and it was pleasing to see that the vast majority of survey respondents are either satisfied or very satisfied with the services provided by LGMA Tasmania. It would be great if all of you could talk to other people in your workplace, tell them about the networking and other benefits provided by LGMA Tasmania and encourage them to join. The more local government professionals who join us as members the stronger we will be as an organisation and the better services we will be able to offer.

Notwithstanding the positive survey results, there are opportunities to further improve what we offer to our members – in particular there appears to be a demand for LGMA Tasmania to take on a greater role in lobbying and influencing the strategic directions of local government.

On that issue, the Board contacted the political parties prior to the State election to express LGMA Tasmania's view on the way forward for local government. It was terrific to have the opportunity to discuss this further with the new Minister for Local Government Brian Green at the 25 June Board meeting and he has agreed to meet with us several times per year.

It is now 30 June as I sit down to write this report and another financial year bites the dust. 2009/10 has been quite a year – what with the water and sewerage reforms, council elections, State elections and no doubt many other significant events across Tasmanian councils. Let's hope that 2010/11 will be a quieter year – but I don't know if that will actually be the case!

Although the Government made an election promise of no forced amalgamations – and Minister Green

confirmed this at our meeting - over the next year we can still expect quite a lot of things to happen that will or could impact on local government – for example:

- a review of valuations and rating, which will hopefully reduce the cost of valuations to local government and provide enhanced flexibility in how councils can determine rates.
- a review of the State taxation system which I understand will also take the valuations and rating review into account. The review was recently announced as part of the State budget and has the potential to impact on how councils raise revenue into the future.
- finalisation of the regional planning schemes and development of a metropolitan plan, which is likely to be a pre-requisite for many Commonwealth Government grant opportunities in the future.
- a Commonwealth election, which may provide a number of project and grant opportunities for local government, and which could lead to policy changes affecting local government, depending on the outcome.
- continuation of the *Stronger Councils, Better Services* initiative that is being promoted through the Premier's Local Government Council, together with the implementation of long term financial and asset management frameworks and the development of sustainability objectives and indicators across the local government sector.
- release of the Minister for Local Government's decision on the outcomes of the Local Government Board's recommendations on guidelines for voluntary amalgamations and on a possible review of local government roles, responsibilities and structures.

And no doubt lots more.

These provide a great opportunity for LGMA members to support their councils in delivering a sustainable future for local government, and a great opportunity for LGMA Tasmania to influence the outcomes.

Frank Pearce
President



2010 YEAR OF WOMEN
IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

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Southern Branch Report

Southern Tasmanian members were lucky recently to have the opportunity to hear Giam Swiegers, CEO Deloitte Australia talking about some of the 'Inspiring Women' initiatives he has introduced and for which he was named the 'Best CEO for the advancement of women in business' in 2005 by the Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency. Whilst the nature of the sector in which Deloitte clearly influences their approach - to say that the Deloitte mentoring program is proactive is an understatement - there were plenty of ideas for councils to take away.

The next branch meeting will be held at Clarence City Council on Thursday 15 July, commencing with a presentation by Nick Sweeney and Ian Hallett on the changes to the *Workers Rehabilitation and Compensation Act* which come into effect on 1 July.

Frank Pearce
President

Josh Munnings
Secretary

Northern Branch Report

Welcome to new and transferred members of the LGMA – Northern Branch Robert Dobrzynski (LCC), Angela Mathews (BODC) and Chris Hughes (BODC). We hope you enjoy and contribute to the activities, professional development and networking of the LGMA in Tasmania.

Two meetings have been held since the last edition of FOCUS as follows:

29 April 2010 which included a presentation by Dorset General Manager J Martin on activities, promotions and community relationships in Dorset, plus general discussion on a variety of Local Government issues such as Right to Information, Crown Land Licences, State Government Election outcomes, derelict buildings, amalgamations and Aurora easements.

The meeting of 24 June was well attended with guest speaker Mr Shaun McElwaine who addressed members on various Local Government legal matters including

- Elected Member roles & responsibilities
- Operational involvement issues
 - Decision Making
 - Public Question Time
 - Planning Issues – Refusal/Approval decisions & examples
 - Taping of Council Meetings
 - Resource Management & Planning Appeals Tribunal - Hobart sittings only
 - Proportionate Liability – Council Liability Act

- Public Liability matters & Court Cases
- Private Building Surveyors & Liability issues
- 337 Certificates

A Question & Answer session was also held with Shaun providing considerable insight and expertise on various legal matters confronting Local Government and individual Councils.

This meeting was extremely informative for all members, very relevant and practical with many examples of the complex operational issues that Local Government deals with every day.

There is no doubt that many LGMA members and their Councils benefit from the expertise and advice that has been provided to members and Councils over many years.

John Martin
President

Peter Groves
Secretary

North West Branch Report

The Northwest Branch has been very busy working on the 2010 state conference at Strahan. The organising committee conducted a 'site visit' in May and we were impressed with the facilities and location to say the least. The dynamic team developed the format for the conference and a number of exciting experiences that will surely impress participants. The theme for the conference will be 'Local Government – out of the wilderness'. We know participants will take away a real sense of the wild from the beautiful location, some interesting insights from the speakers, great memories from the conference dinner and even a small piece of real wilderness to keep.

Tracey Bradley
President

Karen Hampton
Secretary

Tasmanian News

Membership News

Jacqui Brooksbank Manager of Family Services at Huon valley Council is welcomed as an LGMA Member.

Robert Dobrzynski, General Manager, Launceston City Council and **Mark Goode** General Manager, King Island Council, have transferred their membership from other states.



Management Challenge

Following their win in the Tasmanian Management Challenge, the team from Huon Valley:

Rebecca Bell
Helen Dunk
Josh Poke
Shane Wells
Simone Watson

ably mentored by Matthew Grimsey, recently represented the state at the National Final in Melbourne.

Although they weren't winners on the day, we are sure that they will have found the experience an invaluable one.

National Congress Sponsorship

As mentioned in last FOCUS, Sam Davis (Burnie City Council) and Aby McGuire (Kingborough Council) were the winners of sponsorship to attend National Congress. They have provided the following reports:

Sam Davis

It was an honor to recently receive sponsorship with LGMA to attend the LGMA National Congress in Adelaide themed Re-Generation: New Beginnings.

The congress was attended by council managers and elected members from across Australia and was therefore an excellent opportunity to meet and network with others in the industry.

Most speakers and sessions were around the topics of women in local government, innovative solutions for dramatic climatic and economic events and their subsequent impact on local communities. Being a 'numbers' person, it was refreshing to attend a congress where sessions focused on social inclusion and humanitarian issues.

I found most of the speakers interesting and inspirational like Christine Nixon, Chair of the Victorian Bushfire Recovery & Reconstruction Authority, and Cheryl Kernot who spoke about the social responsibilities of business and the value of social investment.

For me, the most captivating speaker and the highlight of the event was listening to Tim Costello, the CEO of World Vision Australia. He spoke of his experiences with global events including poverty, population growth, climate change and social justice.

He described the world as a global village, the sum of all local communities. Global events are all simply 'local events that happen elsewhere' and with globalisation we can all be affected by events happening elsewhere in the world. By being socially responsible in the professional and personal decisions we make we all have the power to make a measurable difference in the world.

Attending the congress allowed me some important time for personal reflection on why I enjoy working in Local Government. It's easy to get wrapped up in day to day tasks and lose sight of the big picture. Local government is the most connected level of government and plays a huge part in building strong and sustainable communities.

I'd like to thank LGMA for the opportunity to take part in the congress. The event was a great success and I know I walked away feeling re-generated and excited about the possibilities for new beginnings for my own career in local government.

Abylene McGuire

The trip to Adelaide for the Congress took somewhat longer than initially anticipated; a 12-hour trip from Hobart, via Canberra as we took the most scenic route to the city of churches.

However, it was all up from here...

The quality of the keynote speakers was exceptional and whilst covering such a diverse range of issues, all offered relevance within the theme of Re-Generation and an inextricable link to local government.

The first day keynotes' focus on emergency management highlighted the importance of recovery and the ongoing necessity to ensure the health and wellbeing of a community. The consideration to the psychological, social and physical fragility of a place, an event itself and the community was an example of the complexities of communities and how each event will have a different and often unpredictable impact.

Tim Costello's presentation on connecting local government to global solutions was a clear highlight. He identified that 'global is what you get when you add up all the locals' and that a 'global crisis is a local crisis somewhere, it's just happening somewhere else'; reinforcing the relevance of the Millennium Development Goals, global:local and that local government does have a role to play. A number of his statistics and real-life examples were staggering, highlighting the huge levels of disempowerment in developing countries and their differing climate change impacts.

Cheryl Kernot's presentation looked at global systemic change and social purposes for social business; a different way of thinking, particularly in a local government context. It was interesting to see the concept and demonstrable benefits of social return on investment, the equivalent monetary figure in a social context and the embedding of corporate social responsibility in a long-term process.

The sessions focusing on gender and the YoWiLG all highlighted flexibility, mentoring, support in career paths and in secondment/acting roles as issues requiring attention. The panel session by LGMA Management Challenge winners was fantastic and



brought the issues to the fore in a most lively and interactive way.

Knox City Council's presentation on their Organisational Excellence Strategy showcased an extensive and rewarding process in an obviously forward-thinking Council. This focused on the importance of values and trust, leadership development programs, structuring mentoring, staff engagement and critical self-awareness programs within an organisation. Their CEO also spoke of the need for long-term leadership resilience, sustainability of performance and the detrimental impact of cordial hypocrisy in a management team in corroding relationships and fracturing trust.

Sophie Morrell's presentation I found truly inspiring. Her courage, sheer determination and a fabulous sense of humour in overcoming adversity were entirely admirable. At 27 (my age) her leukaemia diagnosis highlighted how unexpected events can dramatically change your life's course. The need to focus on effective work/life balance became clearer and to take the time to step back. At the end of her presentation I sat with tears streaming down my face admiring her incredible journey and strength.

The Congress was a great experience showcasing leading practice and innovation. Many thanks to LGMA for the sponsorship opportunity enabling me to attend.

Upcoming Events

Wednesday 14 July N W Branch
Waratah Wynyard Council

Thursday 15 July Southern Branch
11.00 am Clarence City Council
Including presentation on changes to Workers' Compensation legislation.

October 28 & 29 – Annual Conference
See following page

Friday 3 December (TBC)
Managing Political Environment
Full details at a later date.

Events Calendar

July	
Wednesday 14	N W Branch, Waratah Wynyard
Thursday 15	Southern Branch, Clarence
August	
Friday 13	Board Meeting
Thursday 26	Northern Branch
October	
Friday 1	Southern Branch
Wednesday 6	NW Branch
Thursday 21	Northern Branch
Wednesday 27	Board Meeting
Thursday 28 – Friday 29	Annual General Meeting and Conference
December	
Thursday 2	Southern Branch
Friday 3	Managing in a Political Environment Workshop (TBC)
Thursday 9	Northern Branch
Friday 17	Board Meeting

For more news and information visit
www.lgma.org.au/tasmania

Or contact

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National News

To find out what is happening nationally
visit www.lgma.org.au



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Local Government - Out of the Wilderness

2010 AGM and Conference
Thursday 28 and Friday 29 October 2010

Speakers include:

Hon Margaret Reynolds, currently Chair of the Australian Centre for Excellence for local Government and CEO, national Disability Services - Tasmania and former Senator and Minister for Local Government and Minister for the Status of Women.

'Workforce Planning - ...What is Australian Local Government Missing?'

Ricky Langford, Exercise Physiologist

'Health is your business'

Allan Priess, Senior Consultant McArthur

Recent research into gender balance in senior management positions on Local Government came up with some surprising findings.....

Clayton Hawkins, UTAS

How Councils can use social media

Abylene McGuire

Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen – two amazing weeks of advocacy across all languages, cultures and regions of the world

Many thanks to confirmed sponsors:

Principal



Dinner



Pre-Conference Function

MARSH

Session sponsors



Major prize



Break



Printing
Print Mail Logistics

Trade Display



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