This Week @ LGANT Newsletter

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

22 AUGUST 08

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JILKMINGGAN COMMUNITY ROAD PROJECT PROGRESS

Work has progressed on the new concrete causeway in township of Jilkminggan in the Roper Gulf Shire. LGANT has provided project management for the construction of the concrete causeway which allows year-round access to the community. Following heavy rains this access was hindered although this will soon not be a problem. The project has been funded through the Federal Government 'Task of Opportunity' Program. The photos below show the concrete pour of the causeway.

LGANT HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGERS FORUM 2008 A SUCCESS

The inaugural Human Resource Managers Forum held on 18th & 19th August proved to be a welcomed and valuable initiative. The group had the opportunity to finally meet and discuss common issues. Topics covered ranged from a history of local government in the NT and the 'why we are where we currently are' in relation to current HR practices; learning the legislation and regulations; knowing the demographic context in which local government councils operate and information from a range of valuable support services available.

Operational 'issues from the floor' were discussed and the role of LGANT and WALGA explained. Much discussion focused on the current Industrial Relations issues facing councils and a way forward was identified.

The group unanimously supported further collaboration and will now investigate becoming a HR Reference Group to address current operational issues but more importantly, become a united voice for policy development in the NT local government sector.

For information or access to handouts from the forum, please contact **Sue Davy** at **sue.davy@lgant.asn.au**

INDIGENOUS ROAD SAFETY FORUM, CAIRNS – 29-31 OCTOBER 2008

The Federal Government's Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government is arranging a forum in partnership with Queensland Transport. The forum is an initiative of the National Road Safety Strategy 2001-2010. It provides an opportunity for practitioners in a variety of fields to collectively assess and progress actions to improve road safety for Indigenous Australians. The aim of the forum is to share resources and information to maintain an ongoing national commitment to addressing road safety issues that affect Indigenous people. Outcomes of the forum include making recommendations to produce practical and locally-relevant initiatives. Individuals and representatives of organisations who have an interest in improving Indigenous road safety should attend. For more information visit:
http://www.infrastructure.gov.au/roads/safety/indigenous_road_safety/index.aspx

NATIONAL CODE OF PRACTICE FOR THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

Developed jointly by the Australian Procurement and Construction Council and the Department of Workplace Relations Advisory Committee, National Code of Practice for the Construction Industry has been endorsed and adopted by the Australian Government State and Territory Governments.

The Guidelines provide a clear statement of Australian Government policy and sets out the workplace relations and administrative requirements of those parties with whom the Australian Government wishes to do business.

One of the changes to the Guidelines that came from the review in 2005 was a requirement for Australian Government and State and Territory agencies to only accept tenders or expressions of interest from contractors for Australian Government projects that are compliant with the Code and Guidelines at the time they lodge their tender or expression of interest.

Local Government needs to be across the Code and the implications it may have on programs they deliver on behalf of the Australian Government Agencies.

Code and Guidelines can be downloaded from **www.workplace.gov.au/building**

LOCAL GOVERNMENT RECOMMENDATIONS ON LIQUOR LICENSING

The Federal Government's focus on alcohol problems presented the opportunity to introduce evidence-based mechanisms for local government to collaboratively contribute to the development of whole-of-government policy and programs to address alcohol-related problems.

The National Local Government Drug and Alcohol Advisory Committee (NLGDAAC) undertook research and convened a workshop to document the key differences between legislative and regulatory liquor licensing frameworks across Australia, how these frameworks work in with local government, and the benefits and constraints of each model to help form a local government submission for contribution to the Council of Australian Government's (COAG) binge drinking paper. The Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) supported NLGDAAC's proposal.

A Submission – Local Government Recommendations on Liquor Licensing - identifying a number of recommendations to support local government's capacity to better manage alcohol-related issues and minimise harms through planning, licensing and regulatory functions was presented to the Ministerial Council on Drug Strategy (MCDS) during a national alcohol forum convened by the Federal Government on 15 July 2008.

There is currently no national, uniform liquor licensing legislation. Instead, each State or Territory has its own set of liquor legislation and regulations which control how, where, when and to whom alcohol can be sold. Where these controls have not been implemented effectively there are social costs, reductions in public amenity, community safety and perceptions of safety. Local governments have a significant role in mitigating these impacts and can play an important role in augmenting or complementing liquor licensing regulation. In order to address alcohol-related issues and reduce the associated harms within their local communities, local government is seeking greater involvement and participation in State liquor licensing regimes.

While local government could indeed "step up" to take a stronger role in managing alcohol at the community level, this must be facilitated by state/territory efforts supported by a national policy framework that builds and supports capacity of local government to plan on behalf of their communities.

The NLGDAAC focuses on reducing the impact of alcohol and other drugs across Australia, from capital cities to remote areas, by advocating local government perspectives to national and state policy makers. The NLGDAAC was established by the Council of Capital City Lord Mayors (CCCLM) in partnership with the Australian Local Government Association.

For further information or to provide feedback on the Local Government Recommendations on Liquor Licensing, telephone **Julia McLauchlan 07 3403 4081** or email **julia.mclauchlan@brisbane.qld.gov.au**

EXPERTS MEET TO DISCUSS CONSTITUTIONAL RECOGNITION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

A National Experts Forum comprising 75 representatives from councils, business and academia met in Canberra on the 21st and 22nd of August to discuss constitutional recognition of the local government sector. LGANT is well represented with the CEO and members of the Executive in attendance. The forum discussed three potential models of constitutional recognition for the sector, and is also assessing submissions lodged with the Australian Local Government Association from councils around the country.

The delegates will develop business papers to be presented at the Local Government Constitutional Summit that will be held in Melbourne in the second week of December. The business papers will include “yes” and “no” cases for constitutional recognition. The three models of constitutional recognition being discussed are symbolic recognition, institutional recognition and financial recognition.

Symbolic recognition comprises a reference in the preamble of the constitution recognising the existence of local government; institutional recognition involves imposing a duty on the states to retain a system of local government and that a council should not be amalgamated or dissolved without a fair hearing; and financial recognition focuses on the recognition that local government requires a more secure revenue stream from the Federal Government to provide the services and infrastructure required by the community.

The submissions are the result of discussions held within councils to determine their views on whether they support constitutional recognition for local government; what they would like to see achieved from constitutional recognition; what they want to see in the constitution; and what measures councils believe must be adopted to gain community support to win a referendum on constitutional recognition.

LAUNCH OF NEW EDUCATIONAL DVD - ‘CARING FOR OUR COASTAL COUNTRY’ A JOINT PROJECT OF THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT AND LGANT

The Local Government Association of the Northern Territory in association with the Australian Government has produced a 10 minute DVD that will be used to spread the message about the Australian Government’s Environmental Funding Programs.

In the Northern Territory, getting the message out to regional communities can be very difficult, expensive and time consuming. Accessibility of communities can be restricted, especially during the wet season. In the enclosed DVD - ‘Caring for our Coastal Country’, Ranger Bill and Timor Turtle present an interesting look at the Australian Government’s environment grants programs, and shows us some case studies from across the Territory.

LGANT would like to thank all the contributors to the project, especially the Umbakumba Community, Milikapati Community, Tiwi Land Council, and the Anindilyakwa Land Council. Special thanks must also go out to the Australian Government for sponsoring this project. For more information on Environment Grant Funding, visit the Australian Government Website at **http://www.nrm.gov.au/funding/index.html**

NT TENDER CALL TO IMPROVE INDIGENOUS AGED AND COMMUNITY CARE

The Australian Government has called for tenders to develop new workforce training to help Indigenous people working in aged and community care in the Northern Territory (NT). The project will give priority to 254 people in 49 remote communities as well as other Indigenous people working in Home and Community Care (HACC) throughout the NT. "HACC programs like wheels on wheels help to keep older people independent and in their homes rather than entering an aged care facility," the Minister for Ageing, Justine Elliot, said.

The HACC program delivered services to more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people than any other aged care program. Advertisements for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Home and Community Care Workforce Training Project in the Northern Territory will appear in newspapers this week.

The NT project builds on another initiative announced recently by Federal Employment Participation Minister, Brendan O'Connor which encouraged Cape York people to join the aged care workforce. The Australian Government has provided Blue Care with $100,000 to appoint a regional indigenous employment coordinator in Cairns to work with local communities to develop an Aged Care Indigenous Employment Strategy.

KEEP AUSTRALIA BEAUTIFUL WEEK

Keep Australia Beautiful Week kicks off on Monday 25 August and councils are being asked to Score points for the Environment to help tackle climate change and protect our natural resources.

You can get involved by logging on to **www.kab.org.au** and participating in the 100 point challenge at home, at work or at school. Simply register and record your actions against the list of activities featured on the website and join with other Australians in the fight to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions.

DARWIN SEMINAR – WORKING TOGETHER TOWARDS A FITTER AND HEALTHIER LIFESTYLE THURSDAY 18 SEPTEMBER, 2008

Councils and Government in the Northern Territory maintain and develop millions of dollars worth of assets and infrastructure on behalf of various communities. Careful planning is required to ensure infrastructure is relevant to the communities' needs, is sustainable, meets community expectations in terms of environment and accessibility and is adequately maintained.

This seminar focuses on a number of successful projects and plans designed to ensure maximum usage of open space facilities, along with plans and programs outlining the engagement of local communities in embracing healthy lifestyle change and education of at-risk populations. The seminar is of particular interest to Parks, Recreation, Planning, Technical and Asset Management professionals looking to plan for the future needs of the Territory in a sustainable and relevant manner.

For more information, call Lyn Fullgrabe from **LGMASA on (08) 8100 9975** or **admin@lgmasa.org.au**

COMING EVENTS

- National State and Expert Forum – Constitutional Recognition – Canberra, 21 & 22 August 2008
- goNT Giant Walk 2008 – 1 September 2008
- Healthy Places & Spaces Forum – Darwin, September 2008
- Local Government Sustainable Development Conference – Sydney, 10-11 September 2008
- Working Together Towards a Fitter & Healthier Lifestyle – Darwin, 18 September 2008
- 10 Shires and Litchfield Council Elections – 25 October 2008
- Territory Tidy Towns Awards – Darwin, 6 & 7 November 2008
- ALGA Board Meeting – 18 & 19 November 2008
- LGANT General Meeting – Darwin, 4 & 5 December 2008
- Local Government Constitutional Summit – Melbourne, 8-11 December 2008

FOR BACK ISSUES AND OTHER LOCAL GOVERNMENT INFORMATION VISIT THE LGANT WEBSITE
www.lgant.nt.gov.au

LGANT recognises its major sponsors:

- **Telstra Country Wide**
- **TIO**
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This newsletter is emailed direct to elected members and councils in the NT. For further information on any of the items in this newsletter, please contact the Officer concerned or **LGANT on (08) 8936 2888**.

If you would like to contribute an article to the "This Week at LGANT" newsletter, or need to get some information out to our members, please email Jim Fraser on **jim.fraser@lgant.asn.au**