

LG Professionals Australia – 2020 National Report

Advocacy

The National Office of LG Professionals in Canberra has had a busy year making sure your voice is heard at the Federal level of government, advocating on behalf of LG Professionals members and facilitating the ongoing development of your council's emerging leaders.

As local government is the most heavily community-facing level of government, it is critical that our organisations are in the room for the development of Federal and State policy that falls to us to implement. The National Office has thus been utilising its strategic location next to the halls of Federal Government to make sure that not only is the local government voice heard, but that representatives are in the room in an even dialogue with key stakeholders in these conversations.

In early 2020 National finalised the National Advocacy and Policy Platform which outlines the key priorities and policy principles to guide LG Professionals advocacy to the Australian Government. A copy can be found at <https://lgprofessionalsaustralia.org.au/policies-and-priorities/national-advocacy-and-policy-platform>

As a national voice for our interests and local government professionals, LG Professionals Australia has recently consulted with our sector before submitting local government feedback on Australia's 2020 Cyber Security Strategy and provided a submission to the Australian Government which informed the development of the National Waste Policy Action Plan.

Tasmanians were an integral part of a collective, national push for Federal support from 2019 through to 2020 with successful results. LG Professionals Australia put together documents and campaigns as part of its advocacy agenda and with the support of State-by-State representatives from councils. This was taken up to the Federal Government prior to last year's election but was also part of an ongoing re-iteration of the value of untied grants to local government and other support mechanisms leading into the pandemic stimulus and recovery period of 2020.

In May 2020, the Australian Government announced a support package that included \$500 million under its Local Road and Community Infrastructure Program while bringing forward \$1.3 billion of the 2020-21 Financial Assistance Grant payment. This announcement came on the back of this strong effort supported by local government officers, who are to be thanked for their contribution.

On a person-to-person level, LG Professionals Australia this year launched 'Canberra Behind-the-Scenes' which saw LGP Members (including Tasmanians) in the room for meetings with Federal MPs and Department chiefs to discuss the Federal policies that affect their communities and organisations.

The pandemic set in motion a pivot to digital engagement from National with a series of webinars and virtual networking opportunities throughout mid-2020. This included 57 Tasmanian participants in its ongoing webinar series and at least one representative in each of the small-group *National Conversations* digital networking sessions that continued into July 2020.

Governance

Tasmania was represented at the Annual General Meeting at the National Congress & Business Expo in Darwin in August 2019 and in Board Meetings throughout 2019-2020. National also convened a



special Board Meeting in March 2020 to address the impact, real and potential, of the pandemic on National Office operations and finances.

Events

The 2019-2020 period saw the capping of a very successful year of national engagement opportunities for members moving into more difficult territory in 2020 amid the pandemic. Given the interstate nature of national activities, some plans for Tasmanian engagement were stymied but an agile turn to digital offerings from the National Office kept State members involved. Conventional annual events like the Australasian Management Challenge brought in another three Tasmanian teams in 2020 with Glenorchy City Council reaching the final for the 2020 event.

Newsletter and Digital Outreach

The Local Government Update is a fortnightly digital newsletter distributed to over 3,000 subscribers. The newsletter profiles leading approaches, relevant news coverage and opportunities for members from both the National Office and State Associations. As such, State Associations are welcome to submit content to be included in this to strengthen state-based communications activities. The newsletter acts as a more direct communication tool beyond the more regular social outreach through platforms like Twitter and LinkedIn with more than 2,500 and over 5,300 followers respectively.

JLT Joint Insurance

LG Professionals Australia coordinates the procurement of insurances for all States nationally. This service covers Professional Indemnity, Public Liability, Directors and Officers, Travel and Cyber (by request). This service provides streamlined administration for State Associations as well as a gross saving of approximately \$20,000 from the leveraged increased buying power.

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