

The following is a snap shot of what has been happening around the country in the various States and Territories.

The National Board meets face-to-face twice a year and by teleconference every three months.

## President's Report

These past few months have been busy at the ALGWA.

As National President I attended the NSW annual conference in Broken Hill, met with Sen Cash's senior advisor in Canberra, personally presented Ipswich City Council with the 5050 Gender Equity bronze award and I have been involved in numerous teleconferences on behalf of the ALGWA.

In consultation with Denise Conroy, LGAQ, work has begun on organising a Gender Equity mini Conference (3 hour session) on 25 March 2015. This will take place in the afternoon of the day before the National Conference at the Barossa Novatel, in the Barossa Valley, South Australia. The conference is 25 -27 March with Wolf Blass and Annabel Crabb confirmed speakers.

Congratulations to the NSW Branch on a very successful conference at Broken Hill in March. There was a great array of exceptional and motivating speakers. I took the opportunity to speak with the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) President Felicity-ann Lewis and the NSW Executive about the 5050 Vision Program. We discussed how the ALGWA, Local Government Managers Association (LGMA) and ALGA can endorse a memorandum of understanding and attending an ALGA Board Meeting to explain the program and have ALGA endorse it.

I am also saddened to report LGMA CEO John Ravlic has resigned and Laureen Oakey is the acting CEO. We wish John well in his future endeavours and thank him for his support. We have spoken about how LGMA can partner the ALGWA in promoting the 5050Vision Program.

The Office of Women requested us to re-report all the information previously provided in relation to

the grant funding for the 5050 Vision Program. The questions were qualified and copies of all previous reports provided, however, the our response indicated that further information would be provided in the next report due June 2014. A response has not yet been received from the Office of Women on our interim report. The original intention for the Gender Equity Program was until 2020, however, current ALGWA funding is only until June 2015. Further discussion needs to occur with Minister Cash in relation to the future of this Program.

Cr Janet Davidson attended the LGMA National Congress held in Melbourne and provided a presentation at the breakfast on the 5050 Vision Program. Cr Coral Ross made a similar presentation at the annual Victorian State conference.

In March I was due to meet Senator Cash to present the case for data collection and fair representation of women in Local Government to the Federal Government. Unfortunately Sen. Cash was unwell so I met with Senator Cash's Senior Advisor Dr Michelle Tan. Key points discussed included the longevity of the 5050Vision program; the lack of a national agency to collect, and ability to collect reliable data on women in local government; the possible watering down of the reportability of gender in the Equal Employment Act, and an invitation for Senator Cash to address the Annual National ALGWA Networking Breakfast on Monday 16 June, which she accepted.

Our Annual Breakfast on the first morning of the ALGA conference was very successful. More than 80 people attended including ALGA President Felicity-ann Lewis, MAV President Cr Bill McArthur and representatives from every State and Territory.

**Kathy Bensted, National President, July 2014**

# AROUND THE BRANCHES

## Queensland

The Sunshine State ALGWA branch has its Annual Conference in Warwick from 24-26 July 2014 and a new executive will be elected. Among the speakers are:

- Jude Munro - Full, Frank and Fearless
- Rosalyn Sadler - Unlocking the Pay Divide and Salary Hierarchy
- Karina Devine and Tracy Vellacott - Jumpers and Jazz Festival
- Denise Conroy - Diversity in the Workplace

## New South Wales

New South Wales held a successful State Conference and were delighted National President Kathy Bensted attended. New South Wales also has a new Local Government Minister. The NSW Executive has reviewed the new Gender Equity Brochure and is pleased to see a reduction in the fee structure. Elections were also held and there has been a change to several positions.

NSW is campaigning against the cuts to women's refuges and encouraging women to nominate other women for Order of Australia Awards.

## Victoria

The Victorian Local Government Minister has changed as the previous Minister, Jeanette Power (also an ALGWA Life Member) was not recontesting the election in November. The new Minister is Tim Bull.

The highlight of the past three months was the annual conference held in Eltham, on May 1 and 2, hosted by the Shire of Nillumbik. Victorian State Minister for Women's Affairs Hon Heidi Victoria opened the conference and it was closed by Shadow Minister for Women Danielle Green.

Key note speaker Mary Crooks of the Victorian Women's Trust told the conference Australian women were the second in the world to achieve the vote. She then detailed the extraordinary sexism faced by our first woman Prime Minister Julia Gillard, and spoke of the Purple sage movement and Cathy McGowan's victory in the Federal seat for Indi last year.

Other speakers included Nillumbik citizen of the Year Amanda Gibson who spoke about The Tree Project; three of the five women Mayors of 2013 from the Victorian western region explained how they worked together for their area, supported each other and became a force to be reckoned with; Innovation Leader Rowena Morrow gave examples of innovation in Councils and how innovation can build community leader-

ship and Kellie Nagle from the Municipal Association of Victoria told why councils should Take a Stand on domestic violence and detailed what councils were doing and what was working.

Victoria also held its annual forum for female Mayors. The forum, attended by the Minister for Women's Affairs. Hon. Heidi Victoria, gives Mayors the chance to talk about issues, learn from each other, and learn from previous Mayors.

Executive elections were held and there are four new members. Many thanks to retiring members Cheryl Bromfield, Jean Wise, Cr Colleen Furlanetto and Pam McLeod

## Tasmania

Tasmania has council elections in October and has launched their 'Can Do' campaign. Several information sessions have also been arranged around the state. The branch will also hold a series of four training sessions addressing areas such as how to form your own brand, what to put in your Statement, work out a campaign timetable, be resilient... and so on! Some informal catch up meetings will then happen in coffee shops and bars. The Tasmania ALGWA Facebook page is working well with 3 dedicated managers who may feed in relevant conversations, encourage sharing and keep the discussion going. Discussions last for 2 weeks and they change the photo at the top of the page to reflect each topic. The Facebook page can be found here: <https://www.facebook.com/womencanjoinlocalgovernment?ref=hl>

ALGWA Tasmania Branch will again be undertaking their annual Tasmania Basket Raffle at the upcoming State LGAT Conference. This is the major fundraising event for the year, and the AGM will be held in August.

## South Australia

South Australia has launched 'Women Can Do' booklet for the council elections in November and acknowledge ALGWA Tasmania for devising the booklet. South Australia will be promoting the booklet at four events – two metro and two country area events prior to the end of August. Assistance for these events has also been provided by the Local Government Association. Interest in the booklet is not restricted to women with men also attending and receiving copies. There was very little cost to produce the booklet as the SA Treasurer designed the booklet.

In recognition of the late Mayor Joy Baluch, an empowered woman who led Port Augusta and its Council with 'influence, vision and tenacity' the LGA has launched an award for women elected and working in Local Government.

## Northern Territory

The City of Palmerston is working towards achieving their Silver Award later this year and the City of Darwin is also currently working towards their Gold Award.

ALGWA NT President will be spoke at a lunchtime forum run by the NT Division of the Institute of Public Administration Australia and the Northern Territory Government's Office of Women's Advancement, called 'How women can climb the ladder of success in the NT Public Sector'

The NT ALGWA AGM was held on 20 June 2014 as part of a breakfast function and City of Darwin Mayor Katrina Fong Lim is the new President. Former President Pam Robinson continues on the Executive as the Newsletter Editor.

## Western Australia

Western Australia is in the middle of local government structural reform in the metropolitan area – 30 metropolitan councils likely to be reduced to 15. At the present there are 25,000 submissions received by the Local Government Advisory Board and an announcement is expected in July 2014.

ALGWA WA will hold its Annual General Meeting on Thursday 7 August 2014 at Perth Convention Exhibition Centre during WALGA Week.

ALGWA WA continues to hold events hosted by a variety of local government councils on a variety of topics, the last one being on local government reform, which is occupying much of our time.

Local government elections are due to be held in October 2015, however this date may change to July 2015 if commissions occur.

WA Board representative Cr Janet Davidson is also the ALGWA observer on the ALGA Board.

## National Rural Women's Network (NRWC)

ALGWA is represented on the National Rural Women's Council by Cr Alwyn Friedersdorff of Tasmania. The NRWC has been busy ensuring ongoing funding from the Office for Women. Lots of worthwhile achievements can be cited:

- Feedback was given into the Agricultural White Paper before lodging it with the Office for Women
- Another National Rural Women's Conference is planned for November 10 – 12, 2015 in Adelaide
- A Marketing and Training Day was held in Canberra on 24/15 May with free assistance provided by the CBA staff
- In late May an E-Leaders Alumni event was held in Canberra

Funding is received for various projects and NRWC employs a Project Manager and Accountant to manage the funds. Each submission for funding requires a work plan and budget which also includes provision for paid office staff. NRWC meets monthly either via teleconference or face-to-face. Directors are paid \$100 sitting fee as well as travel and accommodation.

Discussion took place around ALGWA moving towards this type of model and the need for the National Executive to be lobbying on behalf of the State Branches. It was agreed that it is important to raise the profile of ALGWA to ensure that government approaches ALGWA first for matters relating to local government.

Concern was raised that ALGWA did have Facebook, however, it was not being used to its full potential. The ALGWA Tasmania Branch has planned ahead to ensure subject matter is placed on their Facebook page every 2 days.

## ALGWA Facebook Page

Discussion on the various branch and conference Facebook pages took place. All were encouraged to ensure any social media was linked to the National ALGWA social media pages/website. Members are encouraged to use the ALGWA #tag. Vicky Scott of NSW will manage the ALGWA Facebook.

## 5050 Gender Equity Update

The Board ratified earlier changes to the application fees and annual fees for the 5050VisionCouncils for Gender Equity Program. The fees have been reduced.

This has resulted in changes to the wording of the brochure for the 5050 Vision Awards and are as a result of concerns about the costs had been raised by members.

## Corporate Plan

The Board is considering the underlying Values and Mission of ALGWA and agreed with:

### Advocacy

### Advice

### Action

**Representing all in local government.**

## 2015 National Conference

The National Conference will be at the Barossa Novotel, Barossa Valley, South Australia, 25-27 March 2015.

The early bird rate would be \$580. This included the Cocktail Reception (1 hour) and the Gala Dinner. The ALGWA AGM will be held on Friday, 27 March 2015 commencing at 4.30 pm with the National Executive meeting scheduled from 5.00 - 6.00 pm.

## WomenCan Campaign

Tasmania has developed the WomenCan Campaign which encourages women to stand as candidates for upcoming

Tasmanian local government elections. ALGWA Tasmania Branch is offering the use of the logo to all Branches.

## Next ALGWA Board meetings:

**Teleconference** Monday, 28 August 2014 commencing at 9.00 am (Queensland time)

**Teleconference** Monday, 24 November 2014 commencing at 9.00 am (Queensland time)

# National Executive



### National President

*Kathy Bensted,  
Queensland*



### National Vice-President

*Cr Coral Ross,  
Victoria*



### Acting National Secretary

*Karen Murray,  
Queensland*



### National Treasurer,

*Cr Alwyn  
Friedersdorff,  
Tasmania*



### Northern Territory Rep

*Cr Katrina Fong  
Lim*



### South Australian Rep

*Cr Betty Gill*



### Western Australia Rep

*Cr Janet Davidson  
OAM*



### New South Wales Rep

*Cr Colleen Fuller*