

June 17th, 2019

President's Notes – June 2019

The federal election seems a long time ago now. We congratulate Gavin Pearce and Jacqui Lambie on their election and pass our commiserations to Justine Keay and thank her for her service to the community.

My major fear of the election was we would be left with a hung parliament and have three years of political drama. Whilst the win by the Coalition surprised most of us it still has a lot of work to do to get legislation through the Senate; but I feel that we have the stability and certainty that business needs to progress.

Late last month we held a Tourism Operators Networking Event which was attended by around 35 people from all over the region. We had presentations from six people ranging from Circular Head tourism to cruise ships to canyoning; the event was deemed highly successful by the attendees with a follow up event to be held in August.

The coastal Chambers have been active in engaging with TasWater on its trade waste upgrade program (read grease-traps). At costs of up to \$15,000 per business this can have a significant impact on a small business and already several have closed their doors due to this imposition.

We met with senior execs two weeks ago and expressed our concern of the impact this new requirement was having on small businesses and how poorly TasWater had managed the program. They agreed that it could have been better managed and have taken action to implement a Trade Waste helpline: 6422 5444. Businesses (450 on the coast) will be contacted individually, and they are encouraged to share information about their situation to enable suitable solutions to be developed. I receive a weekly update from TasWater of the progress.

One of the issues that has come to the fore in this process is the conflict between tenant and landlords. Tenants feel it should be the responsibility of the owner of the building (as it is a capital improvement) and landlords believe the tenant should pay for the grease trap as it supports that business. Invariably it is the business operator that suffers in this stand-off as the TasWater bill is in the trading name.

In recent years our Chamber has had difficulty in growing our membership base, so we have developed strategies to expand our coverage and to increase the appeal to younger members of the business community.

One of the strategies is to offer more products and services to the business community to enhance the perceived value of the Chamber. We have partnered with Prospa – Australia's largest on-line lender, to provide short term finance to help alleviate cash flow issues and to enable businesses to take advantage of purchases for EOFY Instant Asset Write-off and extra stock for Christmas and other promotional periods. Loans from \$5K-300K over 3-24 months are available. Call me for details.

We will be introducing other products/services relating to HR management/support, energy costs and business analysis/improvement in coming weeks.

The Chamber is engaged in a rebranding exercise to make us more appealing to the larger geographical area to our west plus to the younger business operators in the Burnie/Wynyard region. We want to better represent business in the north west and will release further details in July.

Next week's breakfast speaker is TCCI CEO Michael Bailey who will be speaking on "*The state of the State*". Michael will give his perspective on the economy around the state and in particular the North West region. Last week Ray Mostogl, CEO of TMEC presented some interesting ideas on leveraging regional assets - we are having some great speakers so please support your Executive by attending these breakfasts where possible.

We are conducting a survey into what legal issues north west businesses need more information on; with the intent to have Chamber member and Gold Sponsor, Chris Whitelaw present *Business Law 101* to us at breakfast on July 3rd. Please see the link to the survey in the accompanying email. Following that we will have our normal winter hiatus and return on August 14th. On August 28th we have Grange Resources General Manager Ben Maynard speaking to us on "*Grange - Unlocking what lies beneath*". This breakfast will be held in Wynyard at a venue to be advised.

Project Hercules continues to move forward with another subject filmed last week and the pilot video being given to the Dept of State Growth at the recent population symposium in Launceston - they are extremely impressed with the end product. We hope to finish the production of all six videos in August. I will be showing the pilot video at Wednesday night's meeting.

This Wednesday and Thursday I will be attending the Tasmanian Energy Development Conference in Devonport. The conference features an outstanding list of speakers covering a wide range of topics especially in the renewables area which will become so vital for our regional economy. I will provide a short overview on Wednesday evening.

As always, we have lots happening – please help your Executive team to help you; attend functions, give us feedback, recruit new members, make suggestions and generally communicate - as we are way too busy to read minds!!

best regards



Ian Jones - **President**

