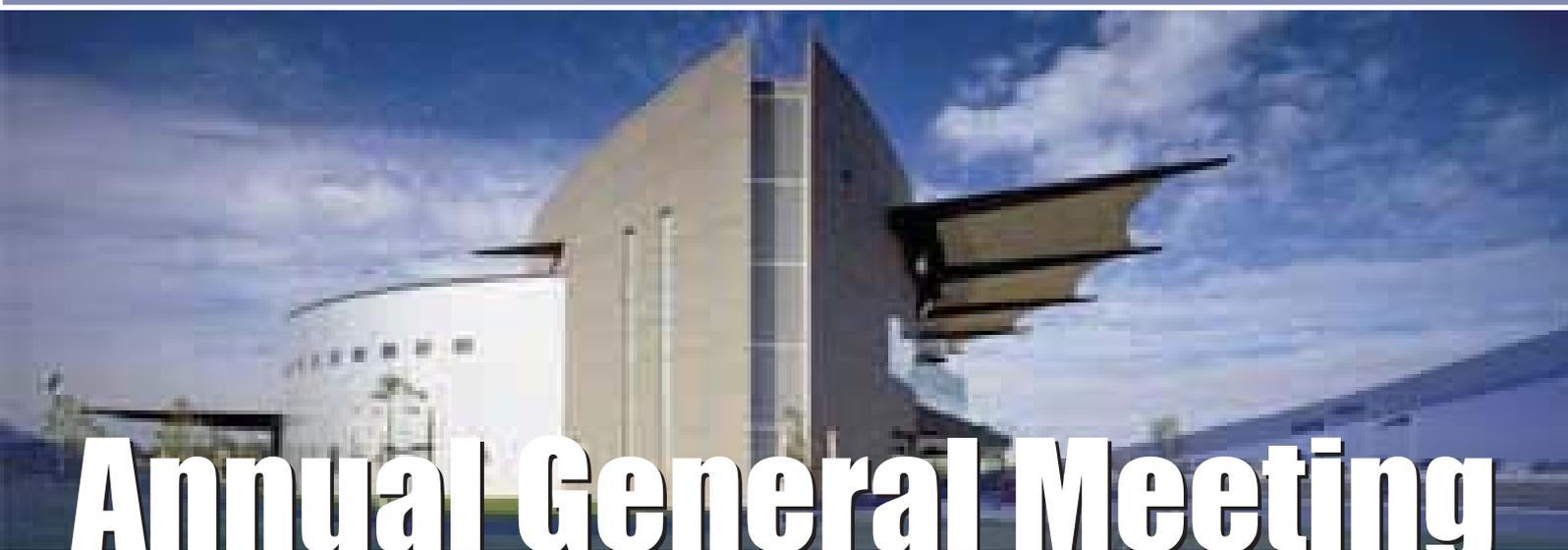




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# Annual General Meeting

## Friday 14th September 2007

to be held at

# The Meadows Sports & Function Centre

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## Message from the Newsletter Co-ordinator

Welcome to our June edition of the RMA  
Newsletter.

Your help in making our newsletter interesting  
for readers, would be appreciated. Any input you  
can provide, articles or Council highlights you  
would like to place in our Newsletter are  
welcomed.

Please contact Sue Calder  
by email [sue@FormsExpress.com.au](mailto:sue@FormsExpress.com.au)  
or phone 03 5227 7418



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## Important Dates

- ▶ Annual General Meeting  
14th September 2007  
at The Meadows Sports & Function Centre  
.....



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## RMA Website



Go to [www.rma.formsexpress.com.au](http://www.rma.formsexpress.com.au) For all current information and updates.

Web/Communications  
Peter Horne

“In a further endeavour to get the RMA website ([www.rma.formsexpress.com.au](http://www.rma.formsexpress.com.au)) working for you, a few changes and, we would hope, enhancements have been made to the information available on the site.

Here’s a brief rundown of the pages and information available.

<a href="#">Home</a>	<a href="#">Contact List</a>	<a href="#">Bulletin Board</a>	<a href="#">Executive Committee</a>	<a href="#">Standard Documents</a>	<a href="#">Privacy Policy</a>
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<a href="#">Meetings</a>	<a href="#">Legislation</a>	<a href="#">RMA Newsletter/Minutes</a>	<a href="#">Links/Newsletters</a>	<a href="#">Council Statistics</a>	<a href="#">Corporate Contacts</a>
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<b>Home:</b>	Takes you back to homepage
<b>Contact List:</b>	Lists all rate contacts within the state. Should amendments be required please advise by clicking on the link provided.
<b>Bulletin Board:</b>	Available for all members to post information they may see as valuable to all members. Things such as positions available, retirements, birthdays, anniversaries, newborns etc.
<b>Executive Committee:</b>	Lists RMA Committee, their duties and contact details
<b>Standard Documents:</b>	Provides copies of standard forms used by all Councils
<b>Privacy Policy:</b>	RMA’s Privacy Policy
<b>Legislation:</b>	Provides information such as the latest penalty interest rates and instalment due dates. Should anyone have any further information they wish to be viewed, please advise our Web Co-ordinator, Peter Horne ( <a href="mailto:petergh@brimbank.vic.gov.au">petergh@brimbank.vic.gov.au</a> ) accordingly.
<b>Corporate Contacts:</b>	Lists corporate contacts.
<b>“NEW” Meetings:</b>	This lists all RMA meetings held, the agenda and where available, a copy of the presentations given. Enables members to follow up or review information provided at the meeting held.

# RMA Website continue

**“NEW” RMA Newsletter/Minutes:** This page has copies of all previous Newsletters issued along with minutes of the general meetings held. Simply click on Archived News or Archived Minutes to view it.

**“NEW” Links/Newsletters:** This page provides links to Privacy Aware magazine, South Australian Institute of Rate Administrators News, NSW Rating professional’s web page and Valuation Best Practice newsletters. Should you have any further sites or newsletters you wish to view, again contact Peter Horne.

**“NEW” Council Statistics:** Provides a breakdown of a Council’s information such as rateable properties, rates in the dollar, revenue raised, additional charges, lump sum or instalments only, payment methods to name a few. (A spreadsheet was issued to the Council administrators listed on the RMA Website requesting information to be completed and returned for uploading onto the website)

You can view the information in one of two ways.

Firstly: Go to **Council Statistics** page and click on **Master Statistics**. This provides a one-line view of municipalities and the data collected.

Secondly: To see how a Council arrived at their total rates collected, click on a Council to enquire from either the Council Statistics or from the Master Statistics page and it will expand out to show rates in the dollar, additional charges, how much, total CIV by type etc.

At the time of producing this Newsletter we have received responses from 28 Councils which leaves around two thirds yet to respond. Should you have not received, wish the information to be resent or have any questions regarding the completion of the spreadsheet please feel free to contact Peter Horne petergh@brimbank.vic.gov.au or phone 9249 4324.

Without the contribution by all Councils a true picture of Local Government rating within Victoria cannot be viewed.

This will become an annual exercise with information to be requested from rate administrators around September each year with past and current information held for your reference.

Should you have any further ideas or information you wish to see on the web-site, please do not hesitate to contact Peter Horne otherwise we, the RMA Committee, look forward to your continued support in this initiative.”



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## RMA President's Message – June 2007

As the middle of the year approaches a busy time for members begins. The preparation of rating strategies, budgets, end of financial year, the 2008 General Revaluations and then gearing up for the issuing of 2007/2008 rate notices will mean the next few months will seem to disappear fast for all of us.



I take this opportunity on behalf of all members to thank our outgoing President, Rod Leith for the past three years of dedicated work to the Association. As Rod indicated in December the RMA and its members play a significant role in the Local Government sector in Victoria. It has been through his guidance that we have maintained strong relationships with all relevant Government Departments and industry organizations.

During February and March the RMA was invited to send representatives to both the South Australia Institute of Rate Administrators and the NSW Rating Professionals Conferences. Both organizations have a large representation of Councils from throughout their states attend these events. Unlike our Association the Conferences are staged each year and are the only opportunity for all their delegates to meet as they have a regional groups structure which meet on a more regular basis.

Attendance at these events by delegates from the RMA allows us to gain an invaluable insight and develop an understanding into the issues being faced by Local Government Revenue Managers Australia wide and thus

provides broader experience within our industry. Likewise representatives from these organizations attended our conference in Ballarat. At this stage the committee is hoping also to send delegates to the Queensland Conference later this year.

The country conference at Ballarat on 22nd & 23rd March this year was well supported by members and I felt it was again a huge success. The committee selected the location following a survey of members held in 2006 which ranked Ballarat at the top of the list. The feedback received was very positive and as usual Thursday's events were extremely successful and provided all participants with an opportunity to network and get to know each other.

Our sponsors for the conference of course play a major role in the Associations ability to put together such an event and without them it would be extremely difficult to stage. I take this opportunity to thank them all for their contribution.

The annual "Bob Patterson" address was moved from our AGM to the conference and was provided by Jeremy Johnson Chief Executive Officer of Sovereign Hill. Jeremy gave us an overview of the history of this wonderful facility and the challenges faced by his organization in continually re-inventing it so that Sovereign Hill remains a pre-eminent Victorian tourism attraction.



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## RMA President's Message – June 2007

As always the Committee is continually looking for ideas for presentations at our meetings. Recent surveys of members have provided us with a number of ideas and suggestion. These are currently being reviewed with a view to try and include them on future agendas. I am always keen to receive your views and ideas and I would welcome your contact as would other Committee members. At each meeting we are keen to bring you presentations which specifically concern issue facing Local Government Revenue staff. While we want to keep things relevant, we also want to vary the content of our meetings.

I am hoping that another workshop/training session can be held over the coming months. Those members that attended the Non Rateable/Charitable workshop held in February I believe found it very worth while. A number of topics are currently being reviewed including Special Rate and Charges, Issues of Privacy, Rating of Cultural & Recreational Land, Street Numbering to name a few. As members would appreciate the ability to program workshops is determined by the finding presenters with skills and expertise in the field and their availability which sometime conflicts with our own.

The Annual General Meeting date and venue has been set by the committee to enable all members to have this date early. It is schedule for Friday 14 September 2007. The venue is "The Meadows" in Broadmeadows so please mark this date in your diary and I encourage you all to attend. Apart from interesting presentations and some specific local government content, we have the annual election of committee members. Being an RMA Committee member is a rewarding experience and I ask each of you to consider

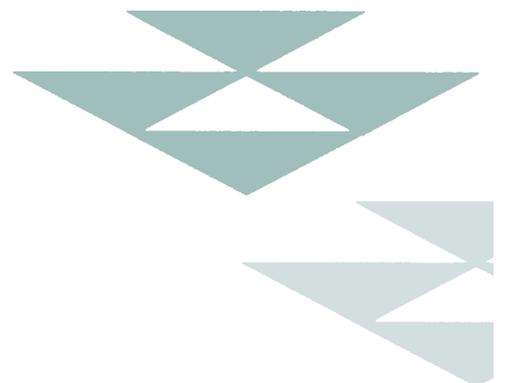
nominating. Nomination forms will be issued and if you want to know more about what is involved in being a committee member, please contact myself or any of the existing committee members.

Glendon Dickinson, F.R.M.A.

President

Ph. 03 555 94800

[gdickinson@warrnambool.vic.gov.au](mailto:gdickinson@warrnambool.vic.gov.au)





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## RMA Country Conference Sovereign Hill Tour

The weather in Ballarat on the afternoon of Thursday, 22 March, 2007 was hot and there was not a cloud to be seen as an enthusiastic group numbering 52 members and partners assembled inside the reception area of Sovereign Hill Tourist Park. After several attempts by the staff there to count us, we were finally admitted into the park and were met by a guide in costume who explained how the park worked and it was interesting to note that each staff member on duty there assumes different roles and tasks during a working week, which helps to maintain the enthusiasm of staff operating the park. After being cautioned not to get in the way of the horse drawn coaches, we were let loose to do as we wished. The only organised function was for all to meet at the Paradise Hotel at 3pm for a drink. Most formed up into small groups and off we went. It was very interesting to look at the buildings along the main street which consisted of food shops and caf  s, a post office, saddlers shop which also sold stock whips, two hotels, sweets shop which sold boiled lollies, clothing store, newspaper office, telegraph office, blacksmith, a candle maker, tinsmith, leather goods and even an old time bowling alley using wooden bowling balls on a narrow wooden track. There was also a number of old houses, churches and two schools which are actually used by school groups who get into the costumes of the time and spend the day having lessons there. It was also interesting to watch the coach builders making or repairing coaches, especially how they construct the wooden wheels. In addition, there are two mineshafts to tour and the creek mining area where you can pan for gold. It was also interesting to watch the sweet maker making toffees using the original moulds that were made in the 1800's and had luckily been acquired by the park. It was even better tasting

the finished product. We were also entertained by the local troopers who marched onto the parade ground and fired off a few rounds. They delighted onlookers by inviting them to come up and have a photograph holding the rifles. Throughout the park, all of the workers were dressed in costume which added an extra dimension to the experience and made it like stepping back in time. By 3pm, everyone met at the Hotel where a nice cold drink was a welcome relief from the heat. Then we decided to go on a tour of the Redhill Mine which is the smaller of the two mineshafts. We went underground after a brief introduction from the Mine Manager and there were about 20 of us including a small group of school children. I personally found it quite claustrophobic at first but after acclimatising to the change of temperature, it was quite interesting and illustrated how cramped working conditions were for the miners of the time. We rounded off the afternoon by trying our hands at gold panning but after about twenty minutes, had only found a couple of small grains of gold, certainly nothing like the "Welcome Stranger Nugget". On the whole, an extremely interesting and educational afternoon and congratulations to the RMA, particularly Megan and Kerrie for organising the tour which was most enjoyable.

**Ian Holland**





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## RMA Country Conference Photo's



The Golf Gunners Robert Bond - Moonee Valley City Council & Sharon Jansz-nagy - Monash City Council



Thursday afternoon at Sovereign Hill - Ballarat



Lining up for the golf competition



Thursday night the Mario Brothers entertained - Greek Night



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## RMA Country Conference Photo's



President of the NSW Rating Professional John Towers & Jane Steiger, with the RMA President Glendon Dickinson



Enjoying the night including President of SA Institute of Rate Administrators Inc Kevin Brogan



Friday the conference - The Conference Room



## Feedback from our members!!!

### Country Conference Ballarat

The committee would like to thank all of our members who took the time to fill in our questionnaire form. It's this feedback that is beneficial to the committee with direction in future decision with our meeting venues and topics. All feedback is discussed at our committee meetings and all comments are taken on board.

### 54 members responded

### Some of the comments received

One of the best all in one-conference venues we have had in the past 5 years

- Excellent venue and very well organised
- Great topics and presentations
- Topics and presentations were relevant to our working environment
- Very informative
- I consider these opportunities are great for general knowledge sharing and networking
- Thanks to the committee for a great conference and organising the meetings
- Keep within 3hours of Melbourne for country conference to encourage day travellers
- Mike Piritidis did a fantastic job with the entertainment

### Other comments to take on board

- The room was extremely cold
- Hard to hear people asking questions in the gallery

### Members suggestions

- Keep the conference at similar self- contained venues
- When the Lady Bay Apartments and conference facilities open, a future meeting in Warrnambool would be good.
- A country venue either Mornington Peninsula, Phillip Island or Lorne

Meeting topics to include Privacy Issues affecting Council's.

Street numbering, 2 lot subdivisions, multi unit developments use 3A vs 1/3etc. Special rates and charges- practical experiences from other Council's on various types of special rate and charges. Eg. Tourism promotion levy, street schemes, shopping precinct development etc.

If we are to work closely with Valuers maybe we should invite someone from the Municipal Group of Valuers to speak at our RMA meetings.

## Movement within Local Government

Deane Hayes retired from Hobson's Bay City Council

It was a happy day when Deane made the life changing decision to retire from Local Government. However after many successful years working within council the decision to retire became a reality on the 28th March 2007 When Deane completed his last working day with local government.

We wish Deane health and happiness in his new direction.

We would also like to congratulate Les Mitchell for being appointed the new Rates Manager at Hobson's Bay City

Council. Well done Les!!

Leah Hepworth from Wellington Shire Council has moved from the rating area to the assest department. We thank Leah for her contribution to the RMA and wish her well in her new role.

Congratulations to Diane Quigley who has moved from City of Yarra rates area to her new role at Golden Plains where she will look after customer service, rates and valuations. Well done Diane!

Dave Slater will be acting Rates Manager at the City of Yarra.



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## RMA Members Please Note:

**Cancellation Policy:** The Revenue Management Association (RMA) reserves the right to cancel an event and notify all those registered of the cancellation.

In the case that you cannot attend an event for which you are registered, a substitute is encouraged/welcome to attend in your place.

The RMA reserves the right to levy any costs it has incurred for a registered participant as a result of the registered participant not attending an event where that person has failed to give the RMA at least 2 days notice prior to the

date of the planned event of their non attendance.

All cancellations and substitutes must be faxed in writing to the Secretary RMA on (03) 9261 4840 or email [kwelling@darebin.vic.gov.au](mailto:kwelling@darebin.vic.gov.au).

**Insurance:** The RMA will not be held responsible for any claims regarding travel, accommodation and/or registration costs, nor injury or loss of property. Personal insurance should be obtained by each participant through the organisation they are representing at any RMA event.



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## Bob Patterson Addresses

M/s Kerrie Wellington,  
Secretary,  
Revenue Management Association,  
Post Office Box 596,  
Doncaster, Vic., 3108.

Dear Kerrie,

Thank you for your kind invitation to the Revenue Management Assn Country Conference next month. I regret that due to my present health conditions, disabilities and dare I say it, old age, I am being left no alternative but apologise for my non attendance, however, you can be assured that as always, my interest in the activities of the R.M.A. and Local Government has not and never will wane.

Your Committee should be congratulated on the Agenda prepared for the A.G.M. to be held on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> March.. I feel your selection of speakers and subjects will result in healthy discussion enabling members to improve their knowledge and skills in Local Government Administration which was the prime object and aim of the Victorian Institute of Rate Collectors formed during 1935. The V.I.R.A. monthly meetings were held on a Friday evening in the Board Room of the Victorian Municipal Association in Queen Street near the corner of Bourke Street, Melbourne.

I was required before being admitted to the V.I.R.A.; as a junior member of the Institute, approx 1946/7, to be interviewed and approved by its Executive Committee. At the following Institute meeting, I was, with two other junior members, viz: Ray Clarke, Essendon and Phil McLaughlan, Sth Melbourne, required to debate on the advantages and disadvantages of mechanised accounting systems within the Rate Office, against the benefits and continued use of the old hand written Rate Book and the new invention of the rate slip system.

I consider the R.M.A., with its past and present informative presentations and workshops has and is still maintaining the tradition, objects and aims set by the Victorian Institute of Rate Collectors. I am sure that the foundation members of the V.I.R.A., if they were alive today, would be extremely proud in the manner which the R.M.A. has continued to uphold the objects and aims which they wisely set during 1935; I have enclosed a photo copy of the aims which was given to me on gaining membership.

The honour of the 'Bob Patterson Address' is proudly held and shared by me in my memory of 51 years in Local Government and with fellow associates during that time, who in the past, gave so much of their time to assist legislators and other Government bodies to improve legislation, accounting and voting systems, gaining professional respect within State & Local Government circles.

Please thank the presenter for his or her address and offer my apologies for non attendance

Yours very sincerely,



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## Rate Notices – have you got the correct address

Local government in Australia funds its activities through various sources, one of which is rates on property. The piece of legislation which governs the imposition of rates in Victoria is the Local Government Act 1989 (Vic) (the Act). Part 8 of the Act is titled 'Rates and Charges on Rateable Land'. The starting point of the rating provisions in the Act is that all land is rateable (subject to exceptions) – see section 154. The person liable to pay the rates and charges is the owner of the land or in the absence of the owner, the occupier or mortgagee in possession.

Unfortunately, not everyone in the community pays their rates when they become due and payable. Councils are often forced to commence legal proceedings to recover outstanding rates. Section 180(1) of the Act gives Councils the power to do so. Section 180(1) states that 'if a rate or charge...remains unpaid after it is due and payable, the Council may recover it in the Magistrates' Court...'

Late last year, the Magistrates' Court of Victoria heard a case which involved a Council seeking to recover outstanding rates and associated legal costs from an individual (the case). It is fair to say the case did not end well for the Council. Not only was the Council's claim dismissed, but costs were awarded against the Council. The power of a Magistrate to award costs is found in section 131(1) of the Magistrates' Court Act 1989 (Vic), which states that 'the costs of, and incidental to, all proceedings in the Court are in the discretion of the Court and the Court has full power to determine by whom, to whom and to what extent the costs are to be paid.' I will now discuss the case, as there is a lesson in it for all Councils.

In short, the defendant had paid the rates that she owed but she refused to pay the Council's legal costs. As the Council's legal costs were the only thing in dispute, no pre-hearing conference was held and the matter went straight to a final hearing. As mentioned above, at the final hearing the Council's claim was dismissed. The Council was unsuccessful because the relevant rates notice was sent to the wrong address. How did this occur?

The defendant owned a property in the relevant municipal district, and her mailing address was correctly recorded on the Council's database. When she purchased a second property in the municipal district, her mailing address was automatically changed. This was despite the fact that the defendant had not submitted a 'change of mailing address' form. The unauthorised change in mailing address revealed a flaw in the Council's administrative systems. It meant that the rates notice was sent to the wrong address.

The result of the case was somewhat embarrassing for the Council, but lessons can be learned from it. Firstly, mailing addresses should not be changed unless a 'change of mailing address' form is lodged. Secondly, where a person purchases a second or third property in a municipal district, care must be taken when entering this information into the Council database. Thirdly, rates notices must be sent to the correct mailing address.

Pursuant to section 156 of the Act, an 'owner of land is liable to pay the rates and charges on that land'. An owner will not be required to pay anything, however, until they have received a rates notice from the Council. The rates notice must, therefore, be sent to the correct address. If this does not occur, the recovery of outstanding rates and legal costs will be extremely difficult.

Imposing rates on property is the lynch pin in financing local government responsibilities. Councils need to ensure that their systems are reliable.



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or contact: Ron Hendricks  
ph: 9278 1161  
or  
Sile (Sheila) Coleman  
ph: 9278 1172  
e: [oscar@anstat.com.au](mailto:oscar@anstat.com.au)

## Interested in automated integration with Anstat?

Anstat has integrated with several Councils in order to vastly improve the accuracy, speed and efficiency of our property certificate ordering and then fulfillment by Councils.

The standard technical interface has been operating successfully and has generated benefits to all stakeholders. Anstat is keen to extend this capability to all Victorian Councils, and can make full testing facilities available to those Councils interested in exploring this initiative. Contact John Carey at Anstat on 9278 1172 for further details.



[www.anstat.com.au](http://www.anstat.com.au)



The RMA Committee would like to thank all of the sponsors for their welcome support



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**RMA** Revenue  
Management  
Association

# Newsletter

[www.RMA.FormsExpress.com.au](http://www.RMA.FormsExpress.com.au)



**FORMS EXPRESS**

## Providing services to Local Government for over 10 years

### Local Government

Forms Express is a total solutions provider of "Outsourced" Billing and Delivery Services to Local Government throughout Australia.

Forms Express has provided a service to Local Government for 10 years and has grown to become a major supplier for the billing and mailing services exceeding 150 clients within Local Government.

### Future Directions

Our Vision is to establish long-term relationships with Local Government. Utilising the latest technologies and world best practices will enable us to meet all your billing needs today and into the future!

A recent improvement to the delivery of our services include the development of LGS – which is an internally developed processing system, designed to move away from an incumbent operator dependant system to a robust, streamlined and flexible system. The unique aspect of the system is its ability to interpret customer data.

Recent new products include the Express Bill Print and Bill Archive services that link up with the LGS system.

### Printing and Distribution

#### A One stop-Shop Solution

- Rates and Valuation Notices
- Instalment / Supplementary / Final / Reminder Notices
- Water Accounts
- Animal Renewal / Overdue Notices
- Corporate Brochures
- Debtor Invoices / Statements
- Other Billing and Mailing Services - fire levy notices, courtesy infringement notices, parking permits, pre-printed cheques, payroll advice slips general council mail outs
- Base Stock, Envelope, Brochure Design and Printing based on your individual requirements
- Our Processing Engine to receive and process data efficiently and error-free
- Consistent delivery of service on the back of an ISO9000 certification
- The Agility with which we react to a change in circumstances
- Ability to continually use Innovation to improve the solution.
- DPID bar-coding for Discounted Postage Costs

### Contact Us...

Please contact one of our Key Account Managers Sue Calder or Greg West for more information

Phone: 1300 780 155

Email: [LGSales@FormsExpress.com.au](mailto:LGSales@FormsExpress.com.au)

## 60 Seconds with Deane Hayes



**Star Sign:** Gemini

**Nickname:** Tiger

**Person you would most like to sit next to on a plane and why:** Rupert Everett, because he has achieved such a lot and is only in his 40's. Author, Actor and a person who is not afraid to face life full on

**Best thing you have ever done/bought for your mum and dad:** Toured with them to their childhood home towns. (They were in their 80's)

**Most memorable punishment from your parents and what was it for:** A hiding with the 'Razor Strap' for teasing the pet cat late at night

**Your best and worst memory from school:** Best: Winning Bake-off 'Best Cake' against girls Home Science class. Worst: When a friend at Primary School died of Polio

**Favourite drink:** Campari

**Your ultimate holiday destination:** A month in Summer in a rural village in France

**What would you never eat again?:** Liver

**What is your greatest fear?:** To suffer serious disability from a car accident

**What is your ideal job outside of Local Government?:** To be a successful fashion designer

**What would you never leave home without?:** Clean socks

**What is your motto?:** Think good about others

**Favourite music/band /singer?:** Ute Lemper

**What are you reading at present?:** Red Carpet and Other Banana Skins by Rupert Everett

**Favourite movie?:** Dr Zivargo

**Favourite TV show?:** The Collectors

**Funniest person to work with?:** Rohan Atkinson