



VICTORIAN INSTITUTE of RATE ADMINISTRATORS

PRESIDENT

SECRETARY

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INCORPORATED 1977

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VIRA NEWS

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

February is already upon us, which means second instalment notices and of course VIRA'S Annual Country General Meeting and Conference. This year the conference will be held at the Mulwala Services Club, Mulwala N.S.W. on 18th-20th February. Invitations to all members were sent mid January to which there has been a fantastic response. Attendees can be assured that they will receive the latest news on the Local Government front, on issues such as:-

- Pensioner concessions proposal operative 1st April, 1993
- Goods and Services Tax (GST) on Rates and Charges
- Corporate Plans and Staff Development Schemes
- State Deficit Levy
- Elections 1993 (Government's Direction)
- and much much more.

Enquiries can be made by contacting the VIRA'S State Treasurer Dale Muir, City of Knox on (03) 881 8210.

VIRA REGIONS SUCCESSFULLY WORKING TOGETHER

On Thursday 28th January 1993 the VIRA Committee held a joint meeting with the State Regional Convenors to discuss issues relating to the further development of existing regions and establish strategies to ensure the future success of each region for our members.

Some items to be actioned are:-

- Coding of members to regions
- Establish streamlined communication links and flows
- Co-ordinate meeting dates between metropolitan and Country (state wide).
- Training programs for members

-Establish operational guidelines for convenors and secretaries funding & operation funding

Mr. Shane Hinchliffe (Shire of Kowree) is also co-ordinating the establishment of a Victorian North Western Region of VIRA, to be known as the Wimmera Mallee Region enquiries relating to this can be directed to Shane on (055) 851 011.

VIRA SUPPORT

There are some exciting and challenging times ahead of us in the Local Government Industry. With the commitment of VIRA'S Executive, and Committee and Regional convenors we will continue to provide our members with the support, skills and knowledge that we trust will give you the "leading edge" in your workplace.

MARTIN KING FVIRA

Newsletter Co-Ordinator: Clare Bowkett Ph(03) 490 4213 Fax (03) 499 1391
Assistant Newsletter Co-Ordinator: Julie Pritchett Ph(03) 742 0831 Fax(03) 741 6237

ELECTIONS SEMINAR

Response Imaging Services is to hold a seminar on voters rolls and election procedures on Tuesday, March 9, 1993. The seminar is to be held at the Radisson President Hotel in Queens Road.

Response Imaging, situated in Wellington Street, Windsor, produces voters rolls and failure to vote notices specialising in Local Government. They also, as laser and MICR encoding printers, produce notices for Council rate offices.

The Seminar indicates the company's commitment to Local Government and will show the development of procedures to make the life of a rate administrator easier during this busy time of the year. This development has come from over 25 years combined experience in Local Government elections and rating.

Enquiries should be made in the first instance with Local Government consultant, Geoff Fleming, at Response Imaging Services on telephone 510 1788.

Make a date in your diary now to be available for the election seminar at the Radisson President on the afternoon of March 9.

Phil Smyth & Rod Osborne



CAN YOU PICK WHICH ONE WORKS IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT?

(CLUE - You should see what he does when a ratepayer tells him to go jump.)

Bishop Collections Pty Ltd and L.G.A. Collections Pty Ltd have now merged and as a result have created the biggest specialised Local Government Collection facility in Victoria.

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Phone 663 5366 Fax 663 5386**

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- High security environment

In New South Wales SECURITY MAILING produces and mails Rate Notices for sixty nine Councils.

RESPONSE

— IMAGING SERVICES —

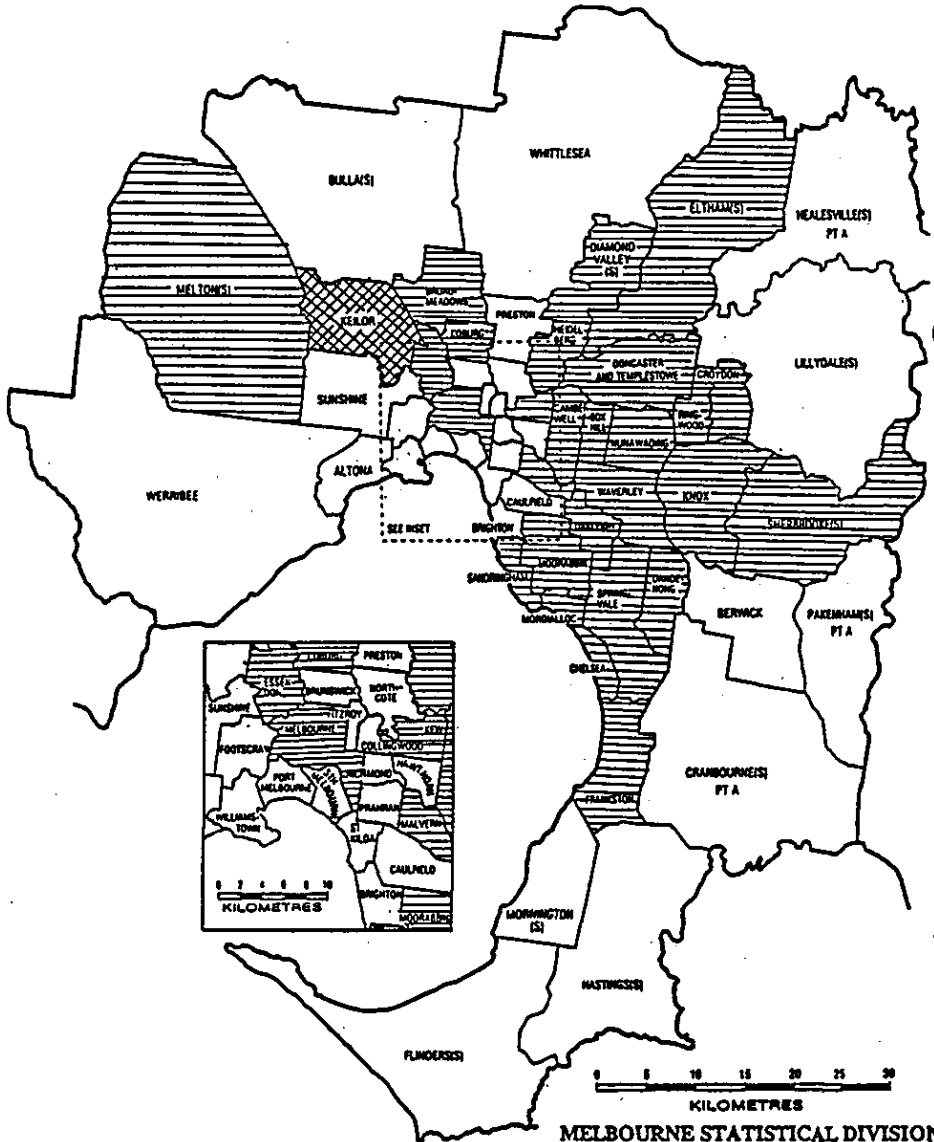
Systems and solutions for Local Government

Election Roll Processing/Printing System: Includes: Display rolls; Scanning Rolls Scanning service & processing; Extraction of over 70's exceptions; and Failure to vote notices. Features of the system: Prompt service; Easy to read rolls, complete audit tracking and a new PC voted/not voted package giving you complete control of the failure to vote process.

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RATING SYSTEM 1992/93



METROPOLITAN

SITE VALUE		
BOX HILL (S)	ELTHAM (R)	MOORABBIN (C)
BROOKMANSWORTH (C)	ESSENDON (C)	MORRISVILLE (C)
CAMBERWELL (C)	FRANKSTON (C)	MURAWONG (C)
CHELSEA (C)	HOBOLDSBURY (C)	CAULFIELD (C)
COBURG (C)	KIEW (C)	RINDWOOD (C)
CROYDON (C)	KNOX (C)	SANDRINGHAM (C)
DANDENONG (C)	MALVERN (C)	SHENSHOCKE (R)
DIAMOND VALLEY (S)	MELBOURNE (C)	SPRINGVALE (C)
DONCASTER & TAYLOR (C)	MELTON (R)	WAVERTLEY (C)
CAPITAL IMPROVED VALUE		
KELOR (C)		

[Horizontal Lines]	Site Value
[Vertical Lines]	Net Annual Value
[Cross-hatch]	Capital Improved Value

MELBOURNE STATISTICAL DIVISION
Statistical Local Areas

A SHORT HISTORY OF MUNICIPAL RATING IN RETROSPECT

BY C.J. COOPER, VALUER, CITY OF KEW

A PAPER READ TO THE RATE COLLECTORS' INSTITUTE ON THE 25TH JULY, 1941

The fundamentally important part which Local Government plays in the social and economic life of our nation can be fully realised when we consider the progress which civilization has made over the last 100 years. So smoothly does the system work, and so accustomed are we to the existence of the conditions which made modern industrial civilization possible, that we are prone to overlook the vast amount of hard work and hard thought which went into the creation and perfection of those conditions, and which are involved in their efficient maintenance, and it is with the object of taking a glimpse, which must of necessity be incomplete and brief, at the origin and development of these conditions, that I attempt to-night to present to our members a picture which I trust will be of interest and which may initiate in us a desire to investigate for ourselves the many and varied phases of this very interesting subject.

My observations will apply to the history of Local Government as it has been built up in England. This history is also our Victorian history. Our Local Government enactments have been founded on those of the English legislation, and with little variation they have run parallel through 100 years since the first crude enactments of William IV. established Town Councils under the Municipal Corporation Act of 1835, and introduced under the Parochial Assessments Act of 1836 a uniform mode of rating-the wording of which is the same as we know to-day in our Section 252 dealing with the computation of Net Annual Values.

It is interesting to remember that John Batman arrived in the Yarra in 1835 and established the village which grew to be Melbourne, and so realise that a very important part of our rating system is just as old as Melbourne itself.

Local Government at its inception was not as we know it to-day, for during its currency of a century, it has been altered, enlarged and improved by the enactment of more than 250 Acts embracing a wide and still wider scope of utilities and amenities, such as housing and civic planning, health, transportation, schools, libraries, parks and gardens, weights and measures fire brigades, etc.

Thus a remarkable change has taken place in the control and well being of the nation and it is no exaggeration to refer to this change as an evolution, or possibly and more correctly, as a revolution.

TO BE CONTINUED IN THE NEXT EDITION OF VIRA NEWS

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WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

NAME	AUTHORITY	DATE
Frank Dunn	Borough of Wonthaggi	8.12.92
Narelle Heard	Arapiles	4.12.92
Paul Coverdale	Shire of Hampden	3.12.92
Rodney Lester	Mclvor	5.11.92
Richard Sexton	Shire of Mildura	25.11.92
Phillip Howard	Shire of Benalla	19.11.92

stop press

The first meeting of the Wimmera Mallee region will be held at 10.00am on Friday March 5 at Wycheproof.

PROFESSIONAL

Each one of us would like to think of ourselves as "professional". That is we would all like to regard ourselves as being capable of performing our tasks well and in a professional manner. At least this should be our aim.

In the world of sports, professional is the one paid for performing and the amateur does not get paid, however in our modern times this has been blurred to the extent that "amateurs" get well paid today.

We tend to think of amateurs though as those who perform tasks in a less capable manner than the professional. Most of us know the names of Australia's professional world boxing champions such as Jeff Fenech, "Hit Man" Harding or Dave Russell and would expect that they would be more capable in the ring than the amateur. That is why they get paid so well.

Perhaps professional golfers like Greg Norman or Ian Baker-Finch are more well known. Many people pay entrance fees to see these play golf at the Australian Open or Masters but would not think about even going to see an amateur championship.

It is the same for the theatre when people get dressed up and pay money to see a professional production but would not put the same importance on an amateur production and others still would not even go at all.

Rate administrators, and those in the field of rate administration get paid for performing their tasks but does that on its own make them "professional"? Or is this, like in sports, blurred?

During the recent seminars that the VIRA conducted on the Local Government Act, Gerry Pekin used dictionary definitions to assist him on his talk on "Rebates and Concessions". It may be appropriate to see what the dictionary has to say about "Professional"

PROFESSIONAL "Of, belonging to, connected with, a profession,..."

PROFESSION "Vocation or calling, esp. one that involves some branch of advanced learning or science."

(These come from The Australian Concise Oxford Dictionary.)

PROFESSIONAL CONT

As yet there is no Degree in rate administration that we can put on the wall and point to and say "We are professional". The Institute has been involved over many years in lobbying for a course for rate administrators and during the next year a course will begin through TAFE that can be used for those in rate administration.

As well the Institute, in conjunction with the Municipal Association of Victoria, conducts training courses that are in module format designed to assist those who have just started in the field of rates through to the Rate Administrator.

There are also seminars and meetings conducted by the Institute designed to give members further insights into their profession.

Footballers in Australia, in all codes, may get paid but as yet are not regarded as truly "professional" as those in America or England. Those professionals overseas rely on their income from sport solely. As a result they put in extra time to ensure their performances keep them at the top. "Professional" footballers in Australia would also put in much more time than the amateur does.

Are you a professional?

If you answered yes, then you would have attended at least one of the courses or seminars conducted over the last year.

If you did not attend a seminar or training course and limited your involvement only to attending a meeting then perhaps you are only semi-professional.

If you did not involve yourself at all, then perhaps you need to decide on whether you consider yourself a professional.

The courses and events run by the Institute are for all the members benefit. For them to benefit you, you need to become involved. Please do so and you may find being a professional brings rewards. It has been suggested that those that do become involved are the one's being placed on higher bandings than those that do not.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR RATE ADMINISTRATORS

The professional development for Rate Administrators conducted by the Vira and MAV Training services is proposed to be held on the following dates:

Module 1	May 26 & 27
Module 2	June 7 & 8
Module 3	June 23 & 24

The course will be conducted at the MAV in Malvern. Interested participants should contact George Peters at the MAV as soon as possible as places are limited.

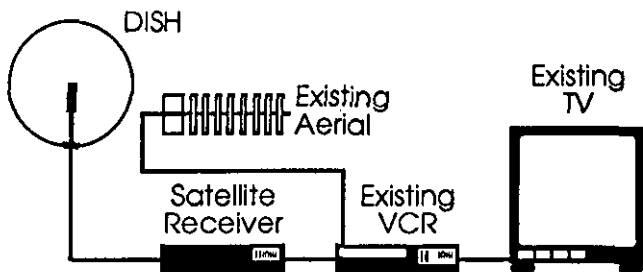
Other courses of interest to Rate Administrators are also conducted by the MAV on such topics as report writing, implementing customer service strategies, on the job training, Local Government budgeting and supervision. All of these would be of benefit to members.

QUOTE FOR THE DAY

* And remember: a good executive is someone who always has a worried look on an assistant's face!"

SUMMER SPECIAL

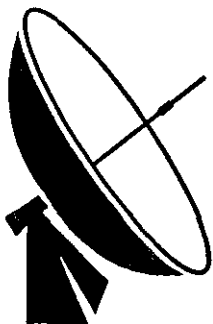
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MOBILE: 018 543 305

REVIEW OF THE PENSIONER REBATE SCHEME FOR MUNICIPAL RATES AND CHARGES

BY ROBERT SMART

The VIRA was recently given the opportunity to comment on the Pension Rebate Application and Verification process, which is being conducted by the Victorian Auditor General's Department.

The main areas of concern, as listed below, were mainly involved with the verification process or the lack thereof.

Some excerpts from the submission have been listed below to give you an idea of the type of contents of the submission:-

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Purpose
2. An overview of the application and verification process of pensioners
3. Value of Pension rebate on rates has diminished
4. Target groups for pensioner rebates on rates
5. Inequities
6. Adequacy of advertising
7. Simplicity and flexibility of cards
8. Problems with the verification process
 - timelines of verification lists
 - no details as to why the rebate was deleted
 - no network of information on pensioners
 - section 84 of the Residential Tenancies Act 1980
 - Privacy Act and the implications of verifications
9. Appendices
 - article on proposed amendments to pensioner scheme
 - Melbourne Water pensioner information
 - correspondence regarding the Privacy Act

PURPOSE

The purpose of this submission is to address areas of concern that the VIRA have identified within the existing Pension Rebate scheme for rates and charges, with particular emphasis on the verification process, to ensure a strict level of control on the granting of pensioner concessions to eligible pensioners.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE APPLICATION AND VERIFICATION PROCESS OF PENSIONERS

Principally, the VIRA, does not have any major concerns with the current application process for the granting of a pension waiver on rates and charges.

However a possible improvement to the actual application form would be the provision of:-
-an area for the applicant to declare that they have not claimed a pension rebate within the state of Victoria in the current municipal year.

-an area for the calculation of the remission granted on the state deficit levy.

The problems commence with the ability to verify the pensioner eligibility on an ongoing basis. The current verification process and the associated problems are highlighted in part 8 of this submission.

However, the comment needs to be made that controls need to be established to ensure that rebates are:- granted only to eligible pensioners and granted only once in a financial year for one property (that being the principal place of residence.)

In conclusion, the objective of this submission is with the view of establishing a system that will keep the application and verification process as simple and streamlined as possible, so that Councils and the relevant Government departments have the same accurate information and to minimise the duplication of records and effort.

CONGRATULATIONS

WEDDED BLISS

Our newsletter co-ordinator (Clare) was married just before Christmas. We hope that she does not confuse her responsibilities as a new wife and continues to put her duties with the Institute first. All the very best for the future Mrs Bowkett. Oh, by the way, Rod (Oborne) also wants to ensure that you do not plan to have children for many years yet. He is not ready to start work just yet.

RELEASE

Kerry Hudson (Malvern) has handed in her resignation as Rate Administrator to formally take effect from April 7 to take up a position with the distributors of Motorola Computers. Kerry will also take annual leave and so effectively leaves Local Government on February 19. Rumours that Kerry is leaving because she is pregnant are not true and Geoff Fleming should be ashamed of himself for starting them. We wish her the very best in her new career and thank her for the support to the institute as Assistant State Secretary for 2 years. Stop smiling Huddo!

GOLF ANYONE

Rod Hughes has left Bishop Collections to start a golf accessories business. Rod is a former Rate Administrator and always maintained a close association with the VIRA. We hope the new venture will be a success and thank Rod for his continued support over the years. Good luck Hughesey!

FACES GOING PLACES

Greg McCormick has been appointed Rate Collector at the City of Nunawading. Greg was at Brighton. Congratulations Greg.



ROBERT SHAW OR
ROBERT SMART!



UNCLE ARTHUR

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SEE ANY
SIMILARITIES?



(EST. 1979)

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