



# VICTORIAN INSTITUTE of RATE ADMINISTRATORS

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**Secretary:**

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## VIRA NEWS

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### PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Many of you will realise I have taken on the role of President with some reluctance. On each occasion there has been a new President I have realised the enormity of the task.

My involvement on the Committee commenced in 1985. At that time Murray Hockey was President and I certainly did not envy Stephen Collins when he assumed the position in 1986, having to follow in Murray's footsteps. Everyone will be aware of the tremendous job Steve did during his terms of office.

In 1988 Gerald Pekin saved me by stepping into the fray as President and I must say I was relieved. There will always be comparisons between past and current Presidents and I was confident that who ever followed Steve, would have great difficulty in filling the void caused by his transfer to Tasmania.

Unfortunately I have to report that Gerry comes out of this comparison remarkably well. I say unfortunately because I am now to be compared to his term as President.

During the two years as President, Gerry has guided our Institute still further to the forefront of Local Government.

Initiatives of the last two Committees have included:

- an Institute Handbook;
- a Seminar on Professional Development;
- a Series of Seminars on the Local Government Act; and
- a short course for Rate Administrators.

There is now very little left for an ambitious President to do that hasn't already been done. I am gratified however that the Committee remains largely unchanged but for one notable exception.

I am pleased to welcome Greg McCormick, Rate Collector at the City of Brighton to the Committee and am confident he will be an asset to the Institute.

Murray Hockey, however, has decided not to remain on the Committee for the ensuing year. He will be a great loss to the Committee and I am sorry, yet understand fully, that he has chosen not to serve another year. There has never before been a Committee of the VIRA without Murray as an active member. He has served as President twice, 1979-80 and 1982-86 as well as State Secretary for the first five years of our existence. He richly deserves the heartfelt thanks of all members as can be evidenced by him being one of the first recipients of our Certificate of Appreciation and Recognition. I am pleased to advise, however, that Murray has consented to my request that he continue to play an active role in the VIRA even though not on the Committee.

Responsibility for the organisation of the country meeting and social weekend will still be taken by Murray along with two additional and

necessary tasks. A policy manual, to be included in the Handbook is to be compiled by Murray for reference by all members. The other task is to review the Memorandum and Articles of Association so they may be updated which is long overdue. If any member has any comments on either of these they can be directed towards Murray Hockey at the City of Sandringham.

Finally I would like to thank the Committee for having the faith in me to hold such a prestigious position in Local Government. With the support of the Committee I can only pledge that I will do all I can to further the Institute and continue the tradition of excellence set by my predecessors.

**Geoff Fleming**  
**President**

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## ***NOEL NEEDS YOUR HELP***

The help of members fortunate enough to be part of one of Victoria's leading Rating Authorities is being desperately sought by Noel Grant.

Noel would be most grateful to any members who could provide as a matter of urgency, a copy of their Authority's:

- Corporate Plan
- Policy Manual and
- Budget Manual

**Please send to:** Mr N Grant, Shire of Deakin, Mangan Street, Tongala 3621

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## **VIRA ACTIVITIES LIST**

Please note that Institute activities for our last financial year will appear in the next issue of the Newsletter.

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# *Election Odd Spot*

## *The story goes something like this....*

A Rate Collector somewhere near Ballarat decided to offer his services to a neighbouring council to work at their election. The "Authorised Officer" on election day duly collected his election material and assistant from the council offices and proceeded to their destination.

On arriving at the country township hall they found that the key that they had was for the side door and not the front door. The front door which opened directly onto the main thoroughfare was a big double door with the latch inside.

So the AO and his assistant proceeded into the hall and decided to open the front door from inside. But alas, the door would not open. So the AO put his shoulder to the door. Still it would not open; it was thought to be jamming at the bottom due to the weather. The AO put his shoulder to the door again with great success this time. However, to the amazement of both people the door left its hinges and fell neatly out onto the footpath. You might ask, "So what?" but

the AO's thermos and eats were in his basket on the footpath, which finished up rather squashed. It was only then noticed that the door had been nailed up for years and had not been opened or used as the entrance. So outside the AO went and after great difficulty managed to lift the heavy wooden door back into its original position.

During the day it had to be admitted to the hall secretary, what had happened. His comment was, "It was a pity you didn't push the whole wall out and demolish the place, as they are building a new complex at the football ground which will double as the local hall."

This nameless rate collector has now gone into business as "Whelan the Wrecker".

By the way, 300 votes were taken during the day and the AO didn't go thirsty. The local hotel provided refreshments during the day.

*We understand Ian Effrett from the Shire of Sebastopol will not be lodging a workcare claim or a claim for the loss of his personal property.*

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# OWNER LIABILITY WORKING PARTY UPDATE

The Working Party has met on four occasions with a final meeting scheduled for 14/9/90. Three options were considered by the Working Party:

- (A) Owner Liability with Owner Assessments
- (B) Owner Liability with Occupier Assessments
- (C) Occupier Liability with Occupier Assessments

In short, the MAV, MMA, Water Authorities of Victoria Inc and the Institute of Water Administration together with the MGV and VIRA have all stated a clear preference for Option B.

This preferred option has now been endorsed by the Working Party and is to be

recommended to the Ministers for Local Government and Tourism, Conservation and Environment. (Water Resources).

The Local Government Department has agreed to circulate draft amendments to the LG Act prior to the Bill being introduced into Parliament.

**The following is a DRAFT LETTER to the Minister which can be used by members as a guide as to the determination of the Working Party.**

**The Hon. Maureen Lyster,  
MLC Minister for Local Government,  
7th Floor,  
500 Bourke Street  
MELBOURNE VIC 3000**

**Dear Minister,**

## **DRAFT WORKING PARTY ON OWNER LIABILITY FOR RATES AND CHARGES**

**The Working Party on Owner Liability for Rates and Charges welcomes the opportunity to present its final report, in line with the terms of reference established in June, 1990, for your consideration.**

**The attached report sets out the issues, relating to the implementation of the principle of owner liability together with an assessment of the advantages and disadvantages of this method of determining liability.**

**After full consideration of the issues, the Working Party has identified Option B as preferred and recommends that:**

**\* the current provisions for owner liability (Local Government Act 1989, S 156 be retained;**

**\* appropriate amendments be made to allow occupier assessments for rates to replace current provisions for owner assessment; and**

**\* other necessary amendments be made to preserve the entitlement of certain pensioners to rate concessions.**

**Other States' practices in relation to liability for rates are consistent with this approach.**

# OWNER LIABILITY WORKING PARTY UPDATE

*This option will require a range of legislative amendments, especially to the Valuation of Land Act 1960 and the Local Government Act 1989, in order to address specific concerns in relation to valuation of separate occupancies and contiguous properties, the issue of rate assessments for multi-occupancy properties and the valuation of caravan parks.*

*Amendments to preserve pre-existing entitlements to pensioner rate concessions are also required. The outcome of these measures is cost-neutral for state expenditure on rate concessions and has no revenue implications for councils. Strategies might include deeming holders of resident rights in pensioner villages to be part owners for concession purposes, and allowing eligible pensioners to claim a waiver on proof of contractual liability of if he/she previously obtained a rebate for rates in respect of the principle place of residence.*

*In particular, it is important that amendments ameliorate the position of pensioners living in retirement villages run by charitable institutions.*

*The Working Party understands that the final form of such amendments would be subject to extensive consultation between the various Departments administering affected legislation, Treasury and Parliamentary Counsel, before being presented to Parliament.*

*The proposed option avoids administrative difficulties and costs raised in relation to the impact of owner liability and owner assessment on the compilation of voters rolls, use of valuation information by other organisations and loss of benefits incidental to the property/voters data file.*

*Retention of assessments structured on occupancy, in conjunction with the introduction of owner liability, is expected to counter all revenue distribution implications for councils and can be implemented with no loss of appeal rights.*

*The recommendations are supported by a representative cross section of the industry (see working party membership) and have been endorsed by the relevant key industry bodies including the IMM, MMA/MAV, Water Authorities Association of Victoria Inc., Institute of Water Administration, Municipal Group of Valuers, Australian Institute of Valuers and Land Administrators, and the Victorian Institute of Rate Administrators.*

*The Working Party wishes to endorse the process adopted as an effective and appropriate means of achieving an agreed industry perspective and, in the interest of ensuring the best outcome for the local government industry and the community it serves, to commend the report to you for consideration and response by the industry and opposition.*

*Yours sincerely,*

*Jim Stevenson,*

*Chairperson,*

*Working Party on Owner Liability for Rates and Charges.*

# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT REPORT

During 1989, I attended various meetings at the MAV with Officers of the Victorian Local Government Training Committee, to investigate the implementation of a course of study for Rate Administrators. These discussions were a direct result of the very successful Professional Development Seminar held at Caulfield in May 1989. From these initial discussions a proposal to run a series of Professional Development Courses was determined and the first module was held on 13th June this year.

This, I hope will be the forerunner of a formal course of study being introduced and we are working towards this aim. As all members are aware, it has been my dream for over 10 years to achieve recognition for our profession. We are now working closely with the new MAV Training Services to introduce hopefully an Associate Diploma Course.

I would like to thank Gerry Pekin and Geoff Fleming for their support and endeavours in this area of development. For the coming year my new Portfolio of Professional Development will see the Institute become a more progressive leader in the training of Local Government employees.

## 1990 Professional Development Course for Rate Administrators

The first intake of the professional development course for Rate Administrators has been completed.

The course was developed and run as a package of four modules over eight days. While the course is by no means a complete course for Rate Administrators, discussions I have had with participants are very encouraging. We are on the right track.

If you are considering enrolling in the next course I would urge you to contact some of the participants of the first intake to ascertain their opinion of the value of the course. A list of those participants is presented on page 7.

The course has been so successful that modules 1 and 2 are to be repeated later this year.

**Module 1 : 20 and 21 November 1990**

**Module 2 : 4 and 5 December 1990**

There is a waiting list so any enquires regarding the course should be directed to George Peters on (03) 267 5266.

*John Grant*  
*Professional Development Co-ordinator*

# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COURSE PARTICIPANTS

*13 and 14 June*  
**Module 1 - ~~20 and 21 November~~**

Sue Wills	City of Maryborough
Michelle Davidson	City of Sth Melbourne
Joe Wiegerink	Sunbury Water Board
Graham Muir	City of Swan Hill
Allan Wise	City of Bellarine
Paul Telfer	Shire of Avon
Craig Saville	Shire of Daylesford
Bruce Smith	City of Camberwell
Diane Ward	City of Williamstown
Debbie Muscat	City of Northcote
Colin Adams	City of Sale
Greg Tong	Shire of Tambo
Bob Skewes	Shire of Maffra
Joanne Scott	Shire of Marong
Barry Herbert	Shire of Morwell
Noel Grant	Shire of Deakin
Terry Barnes	Shire of Winchelsea
Malcolm Tiver	City of Mildura

**Module 2 - 4 & 9 July**

Joanne Scott	Shire of Marong
Graham Muir	City of Swan Hill/ Swan Hill Water Board
Bruce Smith	City of Camberwell
Jo Wiegerink	Sunbury Water Board
Terry Barnes	Shire of Winchelsea
Debbie Muscat	City of Northcote
Barry Herbert	Shire of Morwell
Noel Grant	Shire of Deakin
Bob Skewes	Shire of Maffra
Greg Tong	Shire of Tambo
Malcolm Tiver	City of Mildura
Colin Adams	City of Sale
Craig Saville	Shire of Daylesford and Glenlyon
Allan Wise	Bellarine Rural City Council
Michelle Davidson	City of Sth Melbourne
Diane Ward	City of Williamstown

**Module 3 - 8 and 9 August**

Ros Brauer	City of Colac
Allan Wise	Bellarine Rural
John Slayford	City Council
Russell Ross	City of Sale
Ian Effret	City of Maryborough
Ruth Evers	Borough of Sebastopol
Diana Enkelman	Daylesford Water Board
Noel Grant	City of Brighton
Julie Rodowsky	Shire of Deakin
Sharon Richards	Shire of Lilydale
Bruce Smith	Shire of Lilydale
Graham Muir	City of Camberwell
Greg McCormick	City of Swan Hill/ Swan Hill Water Board
	City of Brighton

**Module 4 - 27 and 28 August**

Ros Brauer	City of Colac
Allan Wise	Bellarine Rural City
Helen Judd	Rural City of Marong
Gerry Pekin	City of Northcote
Ian Effret	Borough of Sebastopol
John Slayford	City of Sale
David Ruddick	City of Camberwell
Roger Smart	City of St Kilda
Graham Muir	City of Swan Hill /Swan Hill Water Board
Noel Grant	Shire of Deakin

# V.I.R.A. COMMITTEE

Geoffrey P Fleming (F.V.I.R.A.) City of Oakleigh P O Box 21 OAKLEIGH 3166	567 3651 568 1690 Facsimile	President
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Martin King (M.V.I.R.A.) City of Croydon P O Box 206 CROYDON 3136	725 4455 725 2354 Facsimile	Treasurer
Greg McCormick City of Brighton Boxshall Street BRIGHTON 3186	591 8688 591 8618 Facsimile	Asst Treasurer
Noel Grant (F.V.I.R.A.) Shire of Deakin Shire Offices Mangan Street TONGALA 3621	(058) 58 2505 (058) 58 2406 Facsimile	Asst Newsletter Co-ordinator
Gerald Pekin (F.V.I.R.A.) City of Northcote 189 High Street NORTHCOTE 3070	481 9562 481 9406 Facsimile	Newsletter Co-ordinator



# **PROPOSED DATES & VENUES VIRA COMMITTEE AND GENERAL MEETINGS**

**Friday 24 August, 1990**

City of Malvern 4.00 pm Committee Meeting

**Friday 23 November, 1990**

City of Coburg 5.00 pm General Meeting

**Thursday 31 January, 1991**

City of Geelong 2.00 pm Committee Meeting

**Friday 22 February, 1991**

City of Wodonga 2.00 pm General Meeting

**Wednesday 20 March, 1991**

Shire of Pakenham 9.30 am Committee Meeting

**Friday 10 May, 1991**

City of Camberwell 4.00 pm General Meeting

**Thursday 10 June, 1991**

City of Croydon 4.00 pm Budget Meeting

**Friday 5 July, 1991**

City of Nunawading 4.00 pm Annual General Meeting

## ***INSTITUTE HANDBOOK***

New Members who are financial but who have not received an Institute Handbook as yet are requested to contact Gerry Pekin on (03) 481 9562 to arrange delivery of an updated copy.

The logo consists of the letters 'C' and 'T' in a stylized, serif font, enclosed within a white circle. This circle is positioned on a dark, diagonal band that runs from the top-left towards the bottom-right of the advertisement.

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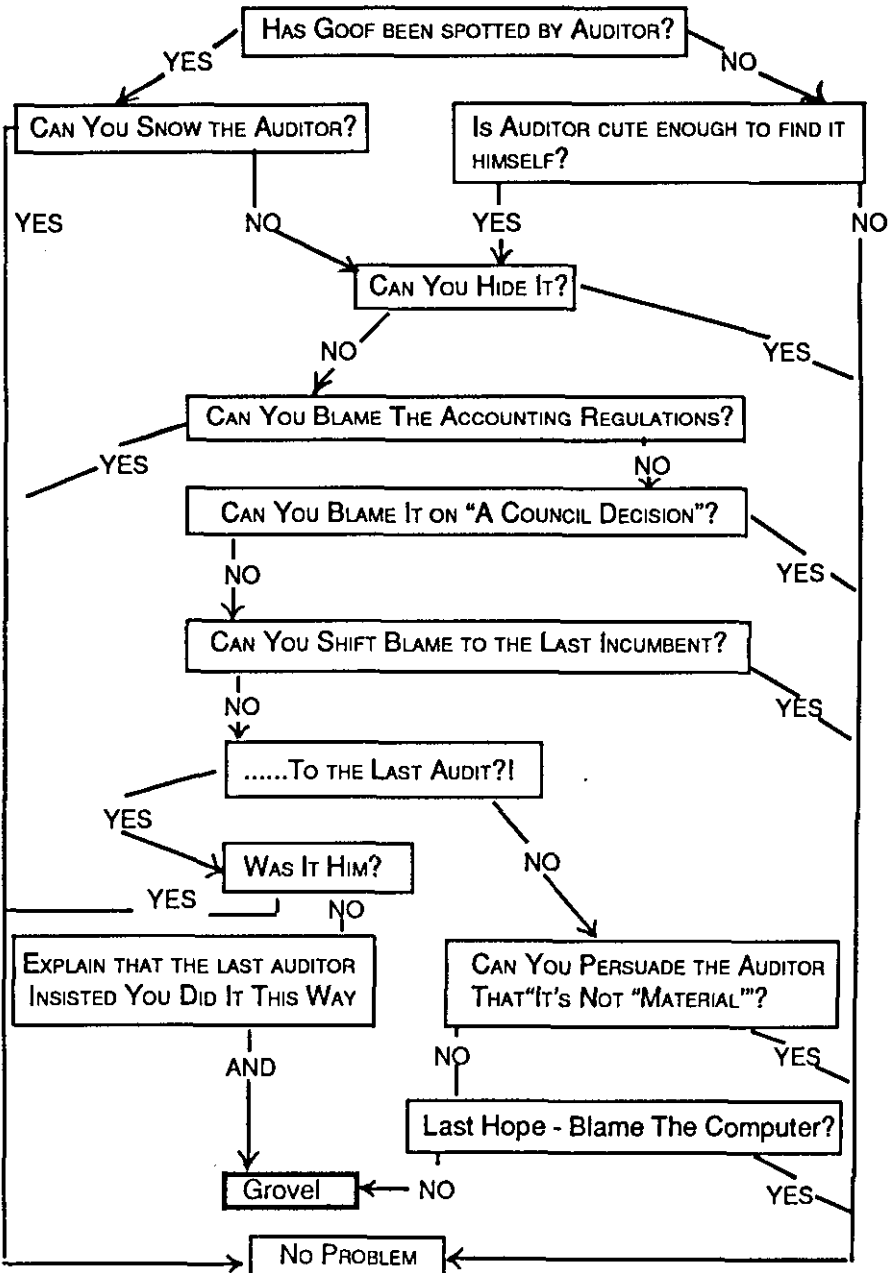
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| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Dog Notices</i>                    | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Rate Notices</i>             |

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