



A.C.N. 005 304 254  
INCORPORATED 1977

# VICTORIAN INSTITUTE of RATE ADMINISTRATORS

PRESIDENT

SECRETARY

**MR. MARTIN KING**  
City of Croydon  
P.O. Box 206, CROYDON 3136  
Business Hours: 724 3288  
Facsimile: 725 2354

**MR. ROBERT SMART**  
City of St Kilda  
Private Bag 3, ST KILDA 3182  
Business Hours: 536 1366  
Facsimile: 534 9105

## VIRA NEWS

Vol XV, No 4

SEPTEMBER 1992

### OUTGOING PRESIDENT'S REPORT

As the 1991/92 Institute year closes and the 1992/93 year begins, I believe we can look back with pride to several milestones achieved.

The Institute has grown not only in size with the creation of a new region (South West) and the establishment of a NSW region centred in Albury but also in stature in Local Government.

The involvement of members in the Land Information Working Party, Future Directions Project Groups, Professional Development with the Local Government Industry Training Board etc. certainly enhances our reputation for professionalism in the industry.

The announcement of an Associate Diploma of Local Government course by the RMIT and LGITB is pleasing to note and thanks must go to the contribution our representatives made at the DACUM (Developing a Curriculum) sessions held at the MAV offices last February. With this option as well as the Profession Development Program run by MAV Training Services, members now have the opportunity to advance their skill and knowledge levels in an accredited form.

The country meeting and seminar at Wangaratta was an outstanding success, so

much so that a repeat performance of the rating provisions session was conducted in June for the municipalities in the North East of the state. I guess we now have the challenge of doing as well or better next year at Yarrowonga.

I believe members have been kept better informed this past year than ever before due to the enthusiastic approach taken by Robert Smart in disseminating constant volumes of information to the Regions. Your response to any issues raised should be channelled back through our Secretary to take the appropriate action.

I would take this opportunity to thank not only Robert but also the rest of the committee for their support and contribution in a fairly demanding year.

Finally I would thank you the members for the privilege of representing you, I have given of my best and trust I have served you well and I congratulate Martin King on becoming President.

**Cliff Wenlock** Outgoing President

*Newsletter Co-Ordinator: Janine Murphy Ph (03) 567 3648 Fax (03) 568 1690*  
*Assistant Newsletter Co-Ordinator: Clare Cooper Ph (03) 490 4222 Fax (03) 499 1391*

# INCOMING PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Firstly I would like to take the opportunity of thanking the Committee for electing me (kicking and screaming) to this position. I do though take the position very seriously and am aware of the high standard of the work undertaken by my predecessors.

With this in mind I would like to thank Cliff Wenlock on his year in the position and also congratulate him on a job well done. I only hope that I can keep up to the standard he has set.

I note also that there are some changes to the committee that cannot go without mention. Geoff Fleming will no longer be a member of the committee for the first time in nine years and his experience will be missed at the committee. However, knowing Geoff I am sure he will still find a way to have his say. Greg McCormick is also unable to continue on the committee.

On a more pleasing note it is great to see Janine Murphy (City of Oakleigh) and Clare Cooper (City of Heidelberg), Assistant Rate Administrators, appointed to the committee. Both have already shown a great deal of enthusiasm by the rolls they have been prepared to undertake during the ensuing year. There are those around who are unkind enough to suggest that they could contribute more than Geoff and Rod however I don't subscribe to that necessarily.

There are a number of issues that we as an Institute need to face in the coming year and these include (finally) the introduction of the rating provisions of the 1989 Act. It will be interesting to see how Local Government eventually comes to grips with no longer having a minimum and how the municipal charge will be applied. The Institute has been fortunate in obtaining a grant from the Office of Local Government to conduct a series of further "last minute" seminars to be held over prior to 31 December 1992. Members will be advised over the next couple of months as to when and where these seminars will be held.

The direction of the Institute should also come under scrutiny and to this end a sub-committee has been formed comprising of Murray Hockey, Brian Hall and Geoff Fleming (I told you he would find a way), to recommend amendments to our Memorandum and Articles of Association. Should members wish to make any suggestions with regard to the Memorandum and Articles please forward them to members of the group.

All in all it should be an exiting and challenging time ahead and I am looking forward to the year.

*Martin R King*  
President

## List of VIRA regions

Region	Contact Name	Contact Number
North Central	Noel W Grant, Shire of Deakin	(058) 582 505
Geelong	Cliff Wenlock, City of Geelong	(054) 223 477
South West	Glendon Dickinson, City of Warrnambool	(055) 647 800
East Gippsland	Barry Herbert, Shire of Morwell	(051) 344 744
South Eastern	Ian Holland, City of Frankston	(03) 781 3555
Ballarat	Rod Leith, Shire of Ballarat	(053) 313 277
NSW	Robert Angus, City of Albury	(060) 238 111

Can each of the Regional Convenors submit their meeting dates to Robert as soon as possible?

# Annual General Meeting

A very successful Annual General Meeting was held on 24 July, 1992 at the Knox Club. Twenty-seven members from across Victoria attended and enjoyed a very informative meeting and a delicious dinner. Thanks to Dale Muir (Knox) for his organisation.

Annual reports were received from North Central, Geelong, South West, East Gippsland, South Eastern and Ballarat regions. It is great to see the high standard of annual reports being submitted and the extent of activities performed by the various Institute regions. The regional meeting dates will be published in the next newsletter so go along to your local meeting and be part of the wealth of information that flows through these groups.

Guest speaker Jan Black, the Course Co-ordinator at RMIT for the new Associate Diploma in Local Government, gave a presentation on the course structure and futures. Jan mentioned that there is considerable interest from the industry already and several TAFE colleges are looking at offering the course.

Thanks of the Institute is extended to Jan for taking the time to talk to the members on the Course.

*Editors Note: The 1st semester is currently under way at RMIT and it is believed that a certain Revenue Manager at Northcote is having difficulties in the first topic "Communications 1" while a certain Assistant Revenue Manager at Heidelberg obtained an exemption from this subject based on previous experience. (Says a lot about who really runs the Rate office in Local Government!!!)*

## CONGRATULATIONS

At the Annual General Meeting Geoff Fleming was presented with a Certificate of Recognition and Appreciation. Geoff did not seek re-election from the VIRA committee after being a very active committee member for the last nine years. During this time Geoff has served as State Secretary for 6 years, President for one year and Senior Vice President for two years. The thanks of the Institute are extended to Geoff and the committee looks forward to his active participation as a past committee member. *You can't keep a good man down!*

*Editors Note: Geoff accepted another certificate of Recognition and Appreciation on behalf of "Flabby Fleming" his alter-ego. Well done to Flabby also.*

Congratulations also goes to Martin King who has advanced from a Member of the Institute to a Fellow of the Institute.

*Editors Note: Really Martin I didn't think you were that old. !!*

# Proposed dates and venues

## Committee and General Meetings 1992/93

Wednesday, 16 September, 1992

City of Heidelberg,

10.00 am Committee Meeting

Tuesday, 23 March, 1993

City of Berwick,

12 noon Lunch Committee Meeting

Wednesday, 18 November, 1992

City of St Kilda,

6.00 pm Dinner General Meeting

Friday, 14 May, 1993

City of Croydon,

12 noon Lunch General Meeting

Thursday, 28 January, 1993

City of Geelong,

12 noon Lunch Committee Meeting

Thursday, 17 June, 1993

City of Knox,

12 noon Committee Budget Meeting

Friday, 19 February, 1993

Yarrowonga,

9.30 am General Country Meeting

Friday, 2 July, 1993

Knox Club,

10.00 am Lunch Annual General Meeting

*With the meetings this year we have tried to have a selection of days and times and venues. If any members have any comments or requests in relation to meeting dates/times please contact Robert Smart (St Kilda) as soon as possible.*

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# VIRA Committee 1992/93

<b>Martin King (FVIRA)</b> City of Croydon P.O. Box 206, Croydon 3136	724 3288 ph 725 2354 fax	<b>PRESIDENT</b>
<b>Brian Hall (MVIRA)</b> City of Berwick P.O. Box 1000, Narre Warren 3805	705 5235 ph 704 9544 fax	<b>SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT</b>
<b>Clifford Wenlock (FVIRA)</b> City of Geelong P.O. Box 104, Geelong 3220	(052) 223477 ph (052) 215624 fax	<b>JUNIOR VICE PRESIDENT</b>
<b>Robert Smart (FVIRA)</b> City of St Kilda Private Bag 3, St Kilda 3182	536 1366 ph 534 9105 fax	<b>STATE SECRETARY</b>
<b>Gerald Pekin (FVIRA)</b> City of Northcote 189 High St, Northcote 3070	481 9562 ph 482 5172 fax	<b>MINUTES SECRETARY</b>
<b>Dale Muir (MVIRA)</b> City of Knox, Civic Centre 511 Burwood Highway, Knoxfield 3180	881 8210 ph 800 3096 fax	<b>TREASURER</b>
<b>Noel Grant (FVIRA)</b> Shire of Deakin Shire Offices, Mangan St, Tongala 3621	(058) 582505 ph (058) 582406 fax	<b>PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OFFICER</b>
<b>Janine Murphy (AVIRA)</b> City of Oakleigh P.O. Box 21, Oakleigh 3166	567 3648 ph 568 1690 fax	<b>NEWSLETTER CO-ORDINATOR</b>
<b>Clare Cooper (AVIRA)</b> City of Heidelberg P.O. Box 57, Ivanhoe 3079	490 4222 ph 499 1391 fax	<b>ASSISTANT NEWSLETTER CO-ORDINATOR</b>

Members will note that two members of the previous committee did not seek re-election. These are Geoff Fleming from Oakleigh and Greg McCormick from Brighton. Their replacements on the Committee are Janine Murphy, Assistant Revenue Manager, Oakleigh and Clare Cooper, Assistant Revenue Manager, Heidelberg. The Institute would like to express its thanks to the retiring members and to congratulate the new members of the committee.

*Editors note: VIRA news editorial note that the two new members have taken on the enormous task of ensuring the VIRA news is issued to members on a regular basis and seek the support from the members of the Institute in the form of regular pieces of interest for the newsletter.*

# Taking advantage of the latest technology

by Clare Cooper (City of Heidelberg)

The City of Heidelberg has recently purchased the Lapres Micr package and laser/micr printer from Dataline systems.

Lapres is an acronym for **L**Aser **P**rinting **E**nhancement **S**ystem

Primarily Heidelberg purchased the package for production of daily electricity accounts but as the package is a forms design package, enabling you to produce your own forms using

lines, boxes, text and imported graphics it has many other uses. For example Land Information Certificates, Rate & Instalment notices, Home Help and Sundry Debtor accounts.

It allows you to print the relevant information from your existing computer system without rewriting your current programs and allows for in house changes to forms design at any time.

For more information contact Sue Bailey from Dataline on 888 6133 or myself at Heidelberg on 490 4213.

## RESPONSE

Imaging Services

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# Note worthy news - odd & otherwise

It has been brought to VIRA news attention that the City of St Kilda has taken the idea of Customer Service to its fullest extent, by putting the name of the person taking payments on the counter window. The name shown is C SHIER and those councils wishing to follow in this innovation should visit the St Kilda offices to view the unusual lettering used.



Murray Hocking has finally found the words to describe exactly how he feels about Geoff, the following quote was overheard at the Annual General Meeting "You're an idiot Fleming!!!"

*Editors Note : If you want to know why Murray finally reached this conclusion you should have been at the AGM.*



Robert Smart recently did one week's work at the City of Launceston with former President Steve Collins. Steve did want to put Robert on the front counter but when Robert told him "Great, I can't be fired from Launceston." Steve changed his mind.

It is believed that the Launceston Casino and the City of Launceston are still recovering from the Smart invasion.

At the Committee meeting the other day Robert also gave a very graphic description of his tour of the Launceston cemetery and crematorium, however be warned don't ask him about it before lunch !!!!

*Editors Note (Again): We all know or over hear various bits of information which are both humorous and interesting. Please let us know by faxing the details to myself or Clare for inclusion in the newsletters. Names can be withheld to protect the guilty if required.*

## THANK YOU

*A sincere thank you is extended to all those who helped Clare and I to put together our first newsletter for the Institute. We hope that there will be a flood of articles from the Members at large in time for the next printing. Any one able to locate the box containing articles for inclusion in the Newsletter last seen in Gerry Pekin's office please contact the Editor urgently.!!*

*Once again Thanks to all who helped.*

# Welcome to new members

A warm welcome to all the new members that have joined the Institute in the last six months and we apologise for not having done this sooner.

The Institute looks forward to the contributions of these new members and hope that they will be able to attend both their regional meetings and the General meetings. A list of each of the existing regions and their convenors is in this Newsletter

Name	Authority	Date	Name	Authority	Date
Lois J Campleman (AVIRA)	City of Geelong West Assistant Rate Collector	22/7/92	Jennifer A McKay (AVIRA)	Shire of Bungaree Admin Officer 31/3/92	31/3/92
Douglas A Paterson (MVIRA)	Shire of Bairnsdale Rate Collector	23/7/92	Shirley Howland (MVIRA)	City of Portland Rates / Property Officer	26/2/92
Peter Bates (MVIRA)	City of Richmond Rate Collector	17/7/92	Lynne McMahon (MVIRA)	City of Portland Rates / Property Officer	26/2/92
Kathrine Brown (AVIRA)	Shire of Lilydale Assistant Rate Collector	11/6/92	Gary Skinner (AVIRA)	City of Broadmeadows Assistant Rate Collector	18/2/92
Vicki Potts (MVIRA)	Shire of Kilmore Revenue Officer	10/6/92	Colin Dashwood (MVIRA)	City of Broadmeadows Accountant / Revenue Officer	18/2/92
Julie Pritchett (AVIRA)	City of Werribee Property/Rates Service Co-Ordinator	10/6/92	Paul Devereux (AVIRA)	Town of St Arnaud Assistant Town Clerk	18/2/92
Lisa Treppo (AVIRA)	Shire of Diamond Valley Revenue Control Officer	10/6/92	Ken Mumberson (MVIRA)	Shire of Tallangatta Rates Officer	18/2/92
Geoff Anderson (FVIRA)	Shire of Hampden Rate Collector	6/5/92	Dale King (MVIRA)	City of Portland Rate Collector	14/2/92
Neil Bainbridge (MVIRA)	Wonthaggi/Inverloch Water Board Rate Collector	11/2/92	Glendon Dickinson (FVIRA)	City of Warrnambool Manager Rating & Revenue	14/2/92
Catherine Chisholm (MVIRA)	Shire of Swan Hill Property & Revenue Manager	31/3/92	Olwyn Greening (AVIRA)	City of South Melbourne Rates Officer	14/2/92
Jan Tardrew (AVIRA)	Shire of Leigh Admin Officer	31/3/92	Ian Allen (AVIRA)	City of South Melbourne Admin Officer	14/2/92



# Professional Development Report

by Noel Grant (Shire of Deakin)

\*\*\* Great News \*\*\*

Most members of the Institute will be aware that as early as 1969, a submission was presented to the Secretary for Local Government regarding a basis of qualification for Rates Collectors. Unfortunately, but not due to the lack of enthusiasm from members of the Institute, no qualification or course was introduced.

Some ten years ago, through the Institute, I again raised the issue of a qualification for Rates Collectors/Administrators, and note that it would appear that this goal has now been achieved.

Although the course is not exclusively for Rate Collectors or their staff, as in 1990, the Executive acknowledged that a course which is available to all staff in Local Government would be the most advantageous direction to take.

Many factors assisted in the final support of this course. They were:

- the introduction of the New Award;
- the support of the MAV Training Services;

- the release of the National Review of Local Government Labour Markets Reports;
- the release of the Local Government Industry Training Plan by the LGITB; and
- the RMIT DACUM sessions and subsequent working paper reports.

This new course has been developed to fill the obvious void that was identified. All is needed now is you, the members, to support this course.

For the benefit of those who missed the presentation by Jan Black at the Annual General Meeting, the following is a summary of the Course Outline. Contact Jan Black 660 4203 or Noel Grant, Shire of Deakin for more information.

## Associate Diploma in Local Government - Course Outline Finance/Rates Stream

### Year 1

Semester 1 Communications 1 (*Core*) & Introduction to Australian Government

Semester 2 Communications 2 (*Core*) & *Elective*

### Year 2

Semester 1 Accounting 1 & Computer Applications 2 (*Core*)

Semester 2 *Elective* & Introduction to Human Resource Management (*Core*)

### Year 3

Semester 1 Information Management Systems (*Core*) & Local Government Law (*Core*)

Semester 2 *Elective* & Local Government as an Organisation (*Core*)

### Year 4

Semester 1 Economics for Local Government (*Core*) & Statistics for Local Government

Semester 2 Public Policy (*Core*) & Accounting 2

*Continued on next page*

# Professional Development Report (cont)

*Continued from previous page*

## **Electives**

- 1 *Computer Applications*
- 2 *Community Relations 1*
- 3 *Current Issues in Local Government*
- 4 *Human Resource Management 2*
- 5 *Working in Local Government*
- 6 *Business Law*

The Admin/Clerical stream is very similar to the above stream.

More details will be provided as they become available. Also, keep an eye out for details at work or ask RMIT to go on the mailing list. You could also check with your local TAFE to see if they will be offering the subjects listed. Prior learning, exemptions etc are being finalised, and details will be provided when available.

## **MAV Professional Development for Rate Administrators 1992**

The four Modules offered at the MAV this year were totally booked out and another set of modules had to be run to accommodate the additional requests. It is indicative of the high standard of this course.

The information given at the Modules was invaluable for both the new comer to Local Government and to the experienced veteran in rating. Presentations given by various guest speakers as well as Laurie Boyd were both interesting and informative and the notes from these modules have become valuable reference guides. Those who attended spoke highly of the course and the speakers.

Another advantage gained from the Course is the opportunity to meet and share ideas, procedures and options between members

from a broad cross range of Councils and Water Boards. Contacts made at times like these become part of a valuable Help Line in the future.

The MAV is currently investigating the possibility of gaining accreditation for this course with credits going towards the Associate Diploma course. With this in mind, the Professional Development Course may have to be altered so as to allow some form of assessment to take place.

## **General**

As mentioned elsewhere in the Newsletter, name badges are still available at a cost of \$8.00, and I must add, that I have been disappointed with the lack of interest shown by members in this matter.

Do not hesitate to contact me if you have any enquiries or suggestions regarding Professional Development.

*Noel Grant*  
*Co-ordinator Professional Development*

# Format for the 1992/93 rate notice

by Geoff Fleming (City of Oakleigh)

A meeting was held at Berwick on 17 August by municipalities reasonably close together, to discuss the wording on the back of the rate notice as well as to investigate the possibility of using a standard back and supplier to obtain a discount for bulk preprinting of the notice.

Those in attendance were Andrew Sullivan (Springvale), Ian Holland (Frankston), Barry Adams (Cranbourne), David Battle (Chelsea),

Murray Hockey (Sandringham), Geoff Fleming (Oakleigh) and Brian Hall (Berwick).

One of the problems highlighted at the meeting was the diversity of ideas on what should be contained on the notice. At the time of this Newsletter going to the printers a standard format had not been finalised.

If you would like any details on the discussions held to help with your own design, contact any of the above mentioned.

## Draft resolutions

A draft on the Council resolutions is currently being put together to be submitted for a legal opinion and then circulated to Members. Any

council who has put their resolution together please forward a copy to Brian Hall (City of Berwick) for inclusion.

## Apology

The humblest apologies are extended on behalf of the Institute and PREVIOUS newsletter co-ordinator Gerry Pekin to Bishop Collections for omitting their advertisement. You can be assured it will not happen again!!

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# Hints and ideas

This section in the newsletter is hoped to be made up of hints and ideas from various councils. These may go on to form part of an industry standard procedure manual, so please contribute anything you think your office does which is a good idea. That is of course if your office does do anything.!!!

## HINT

With the advent of the new Land Information Certificate have councils considered enclosing a note with any certificates currently issued to advise solicitors of the change of the certificates and the increase in charge? The following is the wording used at Oakleigh.

*As from 1/10/92 Council will issue a Land Information Certificate which will be in two parts consisting of Rates and Flood Level details. Details as currently shown on a 600c certificate will no longer be provided.*

*The fee for the Land Information Certificate is \$20.00 and should accompany the application.*

*Please note also that the Local Government Act 1989, Section 175, requires all outstanding amounts to be paid immediately upon settlement.*

Contact Kerry Hudson at Malvern or Murray Hocking at Sandringham for a sample of the wording they have used.

## PROCEDURE

Have councils considered introducing an easyway voucher system for payment of rates by arrangement? Councils that are using this system have found it very successful in the collection of rates. Contact Clare at Heidelberg for a sample of what they use. (We have one at Oakleigh using Word for Windows as well.)

## PROCEDURE

Have councils developed a policy that gives guidelines on who, why and when Council would waive interest charged? Contact Brian Hall at Berwick for a copy of their policy.

## REQUEST

If any Councils have developed Performance Indicators for the Revenue Section please forward them for inclusion in the Newsletter.

## Interest rate for 1992/93

*The Governor in Council acting under Section 172 of the Local Government Act 1989 has fixed the rate of interest on rates and charges at twelve per centum (12%) per annum on and from the 1 October, 1992. Refer to your Government Gazette on the 22 July 1992 G28 1899 for the advertisement.*

# Land Information Certificate

by Brian Hall (City of Berwick)

The Land Information Certificate working party have held their final meeting to discuss the Ombudsman's request to include land fill, land slip and service easement details in the certificate and to discuss other issues raised by municipalities.

The draft regulations have been referred to Parliamentary Council for approval and implementation by 1 October, 1992.

The regulations set the minimum information that must be included in the Certificate but leave the format and style to the individual municipality to determine.

Draft regulations were sent to all municipalities in early July but the following statements are required to be included:

*"(i) This certificate provides information regarding valuations, rates, charges, other moneys owing and any orders and notices made under the Local Government Act 1958, Local Government Act 1989 or under a local law or by law of the council.*

*"(ii) This certificate is not required to include information regarding planning, building, health, land fill, land slip, other flooding information or service easements. Information regarding these matters may be available from the council or the relevant authority. A fee may be charged for such information."*

The Office of Local Government will be circulating the final draft regulations to all municipalities shortly with information regarding the implementation of the regulations.

It is suggested that because the regulations only require information to be provided if it applies to the property (rather than the old style of certificate that often required a yes/no to be marked) that a checklist be used to ensure all requirements have been fulfilled prior to issue of the Certificate. Once there is a sample check list formulated it will be included in the Newsletter.

# New members & current members please note !

Noel Grant (Deakin) is anxiously awaiting a flood of orders for the Institute name badges available at \$8.00 each. Order yours today and be proud of the profession you are part of. Refer to your October 1992 newsletter for a description of the badge. To order a badge complete the form below and return it to the address as shown with your remittance for \$8.00

Member Name \_\_\_\_\_  
**Block Letters Only**

Municipality \_\_\_\_\_  
**Block Letters Only**

Return to **Mr N Grant (FVIRA),  
C/- Shire of Deakin, Mangan Street, TONGALA Vic 3621**

Have members approached their Council about becoming a Corporate Subscriber? This helps to lift the profile of the VIRA as well as providing valuable information to other members of the Council. Corporate membership is only \$60.00 per year. **DO IT NOW!!**

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