



MAYORAL REPORT

13th September 2005

MM2	COUNTRY MAYORS ASSOCIATION
FILE: *	JACH

SUMMARY:

To inform Council of the issues considered by the Country Mayors Association meeting.



The General Manager and I attended the Country Mayors Association meeting in Sydney on Friday, 26 August.

The meeting was addressed by The Hon. Kerry Hickey, MP Minister for Local Government, Kirsty D'Bais, Life Force Suicide Prevention Program and Chief Superintendent Hartley from the NSW Police.

The Minister didn't use his prepared speech but gave delegates the opportunity to ask questions. He is committed to retaining both the Mayor and General Manager on the Conduct Committee, he will investigate how complaints against Councils are reported to the press to overcome the current problem of a small number of individuals making numerous complaints, he is not in favour of Councils paying for spouse expenses and will look at the tenure of Mayors elected by Councillors. In respect of applications for rate increases he advised Councils not to be too ambitious, sell their proposals to the public and to brief the Department well.

Kirsty D'Bais spoke about the Wesley Mission's Suicide Prevention Program. They focus on rural communities by developing networks to foster resilience in times of stress. The program is proactive not reactive and develops community capacity building through assessing capacity, developing information and education services and reviewing support services. I believe Council should become involved in the program. Wesley will be visiting Port Macquarie at the end of September.

Chief Superintendent Hartly spoke about the Road Death Toll and initiatives that have been introduced or are to be introduced to cut the number of road deaths. The Road Toll has been reduced in New South Wales from 1300+ in 1977 to 530 in 2003 due to Random Breath Testing, speed cameras, air bags and better roads. New technology cameras and radar are being introduced, in-car video's are being installed and drug testing is to be introduced.

REPORT IMPLICATIONS:

- *Environmental*

Nil.

- *Social*

The introduction of a suicide prevention program would hopefully put in place steps to reduce suicide in the community and assist in managing the effects on family and friends.

- *Economic (Financial)*

Nil

- *Policy or Statutory*

Nil

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Wesley Missions Suicide Prevention Program be referred to the Community Services Committee for consideration.

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J A C Hayes
MAYOR