



ENVIRONMENTAL  
HEALTH  
AUSTRALIA

## Tasmanian Newsletter January 2013

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### Message from the State President

#### *'The EHA Tas. Year in Review.....'*

Colleagues,

When you undertake a review of an entire year of activities, events and achievements there is always the risk of omitting something relevant or forgetting to mention someone important. Nevertheless it is appropriate to briefly record and reflect on the Board's accomplishments in 2012 because it acknowledges the time and effort that some people have freely given to benefit everyone in the profession in Tasmania.

Professional development seminars continued to be provided regularly throughout the year and an associated events fee structure review ensured that members rates were not increased. Electronic newsletters also featured regularly. The Board composition lost David Bradford and then gained Stuart Heggie, Doug Doherty and Simone Hayers. Business portfolios were allocated to Board members to focus on specific and important organisational issues. A face-to-face meeting of Board members enabled a worthwhile Strategic and Business Plan to be drafted and implemented. Executive officer support provided by the national company enabled more comprehensive record keeping and financials to be better managed. A worthy state conference was held once again this time in the southern town of Kingston. An invaluable scholarship program for 2nd year students in the UTas EH course was launched together with DHHS and their scholarships for first year students. More students continue to graduate from the UTas course. EHA is now represented on the Tasmanian School Canteens Association Board.

It was great to see a contingent of EHOs from Tasmania at the national conference held on the Gold Coast. It's vital that we continue to professionally network with our mainland colleagues at every opportunity. In this regard the new national website will continue to develop into an important portal for all EH professionals and students alike.

Thank you to all the Board members from 2012 for your input and contributions to our organisation and helping to deliver events and services to our members. I look forward to another terrific year of more achievements and high energy for the benefit of the profession.

Mark Dwyer  
State President

*A JOURNEY OF A THOUSAND MILES BEGINS WITH A SINGLE STEP.*

*Lao-tzu (Chinese Philosopher 604-531 BC)*

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SEMINAR DECEMBER 2012

The Grange Function Centre at Campbell Town is a great venue to hold the end of year professional development seminar with the BBQ lunch, fine sunny conditions and lots of environmental health practitioners from around the state to meet, socialise with and network.

**Sarie Los**, from Cradle Mountain Water, replaced Doug Doherty at short notice and explained her busy and challenging role as environmental officer. Sarie identified that there are many opportunities for improved liaison with councils and EHOs on incident response and management issues.

**Leanne Cleaver**, Senior Public Health Advisor at DHHS, stressed the importance and value of exercising and testing emergency management plans. Leanne provided a detailed overview of Exercise Multi Link which was a 1 day exercise that tested the state's response to a sinister biological release in Tasmania. It was quite a sobering and thought provoking presentation.

**Michelle Green**, epidemiologist from DHHS, explained her busy and challenging role as the new epidemiologist with OzFoodNet. Michelle explained all about OzFoodNet and determined that there is a range of training workshop opportunities for EHOs that can be progressed with the assistance of DHHS and EHA.

**Carmel Miller**, from JMG, sponsored the seminar and provided an overview of the relevant environmental management services to local councils that are available through JMG.

**Stewart Quinn and Eric Johnson**, DHHS, then discussed a range of food safety updates and issues. The manual for child care centres and councils is currently being printed. It was proposed that the manual is rolled out through several regional workshops. A guide for EHOs is also being developed. The PPP standard for eggs applies mostly to DPIPWE's scope of responsibility. Egg stamping will be mandatory from November 2013. There was much discussion of the TDIA's activities of licensing retail businesses at the local level with seemingly little regard for either business or local government. The saga with TDIA continues.

**Glenys Nicholls**, Latrobe Council, obligingly and at short notice presented her student research project on emergency relief food handlers. Her survey identified that there are gaps in the skills and knowledge of emergency relief food providers but that there is potential for food handler training for these groups to help close the potential food contamination loop.

**Phillip Bingley**, East Coast councils, presented Scores On Doors and started with an international overview of programs currently implemented in various countries before identifying specific programs in use around Australia. Phillip has adopted the Brisbane City Council star rating model for businesses in the municipal areas down the east coast of Tasmania. The details of the program were explained as were the overall benefits to the general public, the businesses involved in the program and the regulatory agency. The topic stimulated quite a bit of discussion and Phil ended his presentation with a challenge for us to pursue this concept further with DHHS.

Once again the range of speakers and the variety of topics presented satisfied the appetites of the delegates attending. We need to be regularly challenged in order to advance our profession and to continuously improve the way we undertake our difficult jobs. It certainly helps for us all to be consistent in our interpretation and implementation of public and environmental health issues and this can only be achieved across the state by regular interaction and involvement as a collective group at forums such as these statewide professional development seminars.

I trust that you were all able to attend at least one of the professional development seminars that the EHA Board organised for you during 2012.

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## PHILOSOPHICAL REFLECTIONS

When things in your life seem almost too much to handle, when 24 hours in a day are not enough, remember the mayonnaise jar and the two beers.

A professor stood before his philosophy class and had some items in front of him. When the class began he wordlessly picked up a very large and empty mayonnaise jar and proceeded to fill it with golf balls. He then asked the students if the jar was full. They agreed that it was.

The professor then picked up a box of pebbles and poured them into the jar. He shook the jar lightly. The pebbles rolled into the open areas between the golf balls. He then asked the students again if the jar was full. They agreed that it was.

The professor next picked up a box of sand and poured it into the jar. Of course the sand filled up everything else. He asked once more if the jar was full. The students responded with a unanimous 'yes'.

The professor then produced two beers from under his desk and poured the entire contents into the jar, effectively filling the empty space between the sand. The students laughed.

"Now," said the professor as the laughter subsided, "I want you to recognise that this jar represents your life. The golf balls are the important things—family, children, health, friends, faith and your favourite passions—and if everything else was lost and only they remained your life would still be full. The pebbles are the other things that matter like your job, house and car. The sand is everything else—the small stuff.

"If you put the sand into the jar first," he continued, "there is no room for the pebbles or the golf balls. The same goes for life. If you spend all your time and energy on the small stuff you will never have room for the things that are important to you. Pay attention to the things that are critical to your happiness. Spend time with your children, parents and grandparents; take your spouse out to dinner; play golf or go sailing when you want to. There will always be time to clean the house and mow the lawns. Take care of the golf balls first—the things that really matter. Set your priorities. The rest is just sand."

One of the students raised her hand and inquired what the beer represented. The professor smiled and said, "I'm glad you asked. The beer just shows you that no matter how full your life may seem there's always room for a couple of beers with a friend."

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## DO THE CAN—CAN

A young student of tae kwon do was having trouble breaking a board with his hand. The Master came over and knelt in front of the child so they were eye to eye. He said, "Say, 'Yes I can.'" The child responded, "Yes, I can!" The Master had the child say it three times with commitment and meaning, each time louder. Then he held the board up and said, "Break!" The student broke the board.

When faced with a major challenge, consider what you can do, not what you can't. Always spend more time solving problems rather than talking and complaining about them.

Say to the perpetual alarmist, "Thank you for raising that concern. Now what can we do to solve that or avoid that?" Especially if that alarmist is your own inner voice. Just thinking that you can help makes the impossible possible. If you think you can't, you can't.

***'Those who dare do; those who dare not, do not.'*** Anon.

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## MEMBER'S PAGE

### Board Meeting—Thursday 29th November 2012

The below outcomes resulted following discussions of agenda items -

- **Portfolios:** The following portfolios were confirmed for the new year:  
Membership—Jacci / Doug.  
Workforce & Marketing—Stuart / Ron / Glenys.  
Events—Mark.  
Sponsorship—Alex / Alison.
- **EHA Tas. Scholarships:** It was confirmed that 2 applications had been received for the inaugural EHA scholarship for students in their second year of study in the UTas EH degree course.
- **March 2013 Seminar:** A proposal had been received from enHealth to utilise the March seminar for the purposes of an enHealth 'roadshow' to explain, promote and workshop a range of industry documents and resources available to all EH practitioners. enHealth was prepared to pay EHA for the seminar. This was agreed to.
- **New Board member:** Board members considered the nomination and appointment of Simone Hayers (HCC) to the Board. Simone has relevant skills from her involvement in Rural Youth and from being on several agricultural/show boards that would enhance the organisational, innovation and decision making skills of the current Board. It was agreed to invite Simone onto the Board.
- **National Service Agreement:** The Board agreed to sign off on the amended National Service Agreement that had been discussed at the recent face-to-face meeting of national Directors held at the National Conference on the Gold Coast. All the national presidents were financially comfortable with the Agreement and invited the member states for their formal consideration and support. In essence, the states will continue to contribute 40% of membership fees and 20% of events profits to the national company whilst still allowing the national company to negotiate and provide financial assistance to any member state, if required. This was agreed to.
- **Training Workshops:** It was suggested that EHA could help organise PHRA infection control training for EHOs from a mainland provider. Expressions of interest could be sought from all Tasmanian councils to determine the feasibility of bringing such training to the state. It was agreed to pursue this matter further in 2013.



Our heartiest congratulations go to Clare Harding and Glenys Nicholls for graduating with the Bachelor of Health Science (Environmental Health) from the University of Tasmania in 2012.

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## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

### “Incapable of Managing Eatery”

Canberra Times  
28 Nov. 2012

The former owner of a Chinese takeaway, breached for “deplorable” violations of food laws, was clearly incapable of managing an eatery, a magistrate has said. But Simon Tu has escaped a fine after his lawyer said he had absolutely no capacity to pay off any financial punishment the court might impose. The Canberra Times reports that Mr Tu’s experience and English language difficulties failed to prepare him for the realities of running a commercial kitchen. The magistrate convicted him for two breaches of the Food Act and placed him on an 18 month good behaviour bond.

Health authorities closed the Hong Kong Inn in Holt after inspectors decided a prohibition order was need to prevent or mitigate a serious danger to public health. Raw meat was stored above sauces and vegetables, posing contamination risk and the kitchen surfaces were covered in ‘extensive contamination’ including dirt and grease. Food was stored incorrectly, the floor and utensils were covered in debris and grease posing microbial and physical contamination and the wash hand basin was cluttered, had no soap and wasn’t connected to warm running water. The eatery was closed for about 6 weeks. Mr Tu’s lease subsequently expired and he walked away from the business.

### Businesses Closed Over Food Safety in Ireland

Irish Times  
7 Nov. 2012

Traditional food safety messages don’t work: that’s why some 12 businesses were closed down through the issue of closure orders last month in Ireland. The Food Safety Authority said that 4 businesses were subsequently successfully prosecuted. The CEO, Prof. Alan Reilly, expressed his concern at the high level of non-compliance with food safety regulations by some food businesses. Inspectors found illegal, unhygienic or unsafe foods with significant breaches of food safety legislation that put people’s health at serious risk. He stated that there was absolutely no justification for negligence in this area. He added that the legal onus is on food businesses to act responsibly and ensure that the food they serve and sell is safe for consumption. Businesses must comply with food safety management procedures at all times.

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## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

- Do you assess the skills and knowledge of new food proprietors who wish to operate food businesses in your area?
- If so, how do you actually do this and what criteria do you use to determine whether they are suitable to operate food businesses?
- Do you assess the skills and knowledge of all food handlers working in that business?
- What is your strategy when dealing with new and inexperienced proprietors who repeatedly fail to either understand or comply with the Food Safety Standards?
- Do you regard the provision of compliant hand washing facilities in temporary food outlets as important as having compliant hand washing facilities in permanent food businesses?



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## KEEPING UP TO DATE

### Who Is Where?

- **Helena Bobbi** has left Clarence City Council to work in Tobacco Control at DHHS.
  - **Sally Chamberlain** from DHHS has had a baby boy, Sam. Congratulations Sally!
  - **Kristina Paul** will be the Acting Senior Advisor Food Safety for DHHS from February to September.
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## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SEMINAR THE GRANGE CAMPBELL TOWN WEDNESDAY 20 MARCH 2013

**FREE EVENT**

**LUNCH INCLUDED**

**PROGRAM OUT SOON**

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### EHA (Tas) Inc. Board Members

<b>State President:</b>	Mark Dwyer	<a href="mailto:dwyerm@hobartcity.com.au">dwyerm@hobartcity.com.au</a>
<b>Vice President:</b>	Alex Woodward	<a href="mailto:awoodward@gcc.tas.gov.au">awoodward@gcc.tas.gov.au</a>
<b>Secretary:</b>	Jacci Viney	<a href="mailto:jacci.viney@flinders.tas.gov.au">jacci.viney@flinders.tas.gov.au</a>
<b>Board Members:</b>	Alison Holmstrom	<a href="mailto:alison@dulverton.com.au">alison@dulverton.com.au</a>
	Ron Fry	<a href="mailto:ronfry1@bigpond.com">ronfry1@bigpond.com</a>
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	Simone Hayers	<a href="mailto:hayerss@hobartcity.com.au">hayerss@hobartcity.com.au</a>

**CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR NEWEST BOARD MEMBER: SIMONE HAYERS!**

If you have an issue or suggestion that you would like the Board to consider or if you are interested in becoming a member of the Board, please feel free to contact a current Board member to discuss further.



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