

2019 ANNUAL REPORT

An interesting year with several highlights.

Our membership has been relatively stable over the last 12 months and with the recent rebranding we plan to extend the geographical reach of our membership and deepen our reach into younger business operators in the region plus also extend to trade professionals and home Internet businesses

We've been the recipient of two government grants; one from The Department of State growth for \$26,000 to make six biographical videos of people who have moved to the region; in an attempt to help influence workers on the mainland and overseas to take up residence in North West Tasmania. We are fortunate to have film maker Nick Higgins and graphic designer Michael Cannon as members; without them the task would be extremely costly in fact; not possible. I believe this exercise will create future opportunities to create other video projects.

The other grant just recently received is for \$58,700 under the Regional Employment Trials program (RET) from the Department of Industry, Innovation and Science on behalf of the Department of Employment, Skills, Small and Family Business via AusIndustry.

This is to conduct employability training to long-term unemployed in the Burnie area. We will be conducting four courses; five hours for three days per week over six weeks to long-term unemployed mostly between 25 and 45. Our initial course has participants from the age of 30 to 62. One of the primary attractions to the original facilitator, Regional Development Australia was our concept of using small business operators to conduct and supplement the course material. If this trial is successful, then it is very easy to replicate across similar organisations around Australia. The first course started just two weeks ago and already we have been able to help secure one of the course participants a full-time job.

Our breakfast program has again proven to be very successful with the highlight event being a breakfast in October where we had senior executives in the energy industry including Hydro, TasNetworks and UPC renewables and it was facilitated by the Minister for Energy Guy Barnett MP. We had 55 attend the event.

As always, we must thank Nigel and staff at Wellers Inn as they host many of our events - they are a great sponsor.

A significant initiative for the year was the rebranding of the chamber to Business Northwest. The executive felt that we needed to extend our reach both geographically and within the business community. Our aim is to attract younger business people and businesses in the region extending west from Burnie. It has been good to receive so much positive feedback upon this initiative plus some new memberships.

Business North West continues to enjoy a close relationship with the Burnie City Council. During the year many meetings have been held with council staff: one of them resulting in the very successful event last October; *Bite 'n Brew*. This event attracted over 2000 people and became the forerunner to other events held later in the year.

We are working with Council to resurrect the Excellence in Service Awards previously conducted by Citylink. This event will be held in early November and recognise those businesses and employees who have provided exceptional service to the clients. Another joint project is the Ideas Forum to be held later in the year.

We look forward to working more closely with Burnie and Waratah/Wynyard Councils plus the Cradle Coast Authority in 2020.

We also pay special thanks to our major sponsors: 7BUFM has been a great media sponsor and has provided us with a fortnightly radio segment to publicise our activities - especially our breakfast networking sessions.

DesignEye Creative, Mancell Financial, Whitelaw Legal Group, CVGT, MyPathway, Telstra Burnie, Knight Frank and Wellers Inn have all been great supporters this year and we thank them for their support.

The future looks good as we have increased our profile around the state and have an excellent network of contacts plus strong plans in areas of addressing the proposed workforce shortfall and our mental health focus.

Finally, I pay thanks to the members of our Executive whom have provided much time to guide us along the way and have always responded quickly and diligently to my many requests for comment and direction.

It has been a great honour to be President this year and I believe we have a bright future in front of us.



Ian Jones

PRESIDENT

THANKS TO OUR 2019 SPONSORS

