

## Executive Summary- February 2018

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### **South East Australian Transport Strategy Inc (SEATS) Conference held in Inverloch hosted by Bass Coast Shire & South Gippsland Shire**

SEATS held its quarterly meeting at the impressive RACV Resort at Inverloch, Victoria on the 15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup> February 2018.

The busy, well attended meeting was held over two days with delegates and members travelling from NSW, across Victoria and the ACT.

Bass Coast Mayor Cr Pam Rothfield welcomed everyone, highlighting the significant growth of the area, the beautiful environment and the attraction of many visitors, the importance of tourism and industry and some of the transport issues across the Shire.

A delegates dinner was held on the Thursday evening attended by Cr Rothfield, Cr Lorraine Brunt, Mayor of South Gippsland, several Councillors and Member for Bass Mr Brian Paynter MP. At the Dinner Cr Brunt in her welcome to the delegates and guests showcased the diversity of industry across the rapidly growing South Gippsland Shire, the importance of this industry to Victoria and the nation and the wonderful attractions awaiting the many visitors to the area.

The guest Dinner speaker was Mr Bryan Sherritt, VicRoads Director Safe Systems Road infrastructure Program.

Another highlight of the Conference was an “Inspirational Leadership” Award presentation to Mr Greg Pullen( Shoalhaven) Mr Warren Sharpe OAM( Eurobodalla Shire Council), Mr Ralf Kastan ( Kastan Consulting)and Cr Graeme Middlemiss (Latrobe City Council) in recognition of over 10 years significant contribution to this Region through their work as members of SEATS.

There were a number of stimulating presentations and discussions over the course of the two days. Most presentations will be available on the SEATS website shortly.

Mr John Ernst from Safe Freight Networks Australia spoke about the National Road Safety Program Model outlining the benefits of partnerships to improve industry and community safety and improve industry efficiency. John’s successful work in addressing the serious issue of truck rollovers a few years ago in the South Gippsland Shire has attracted national interest.

Mr Peter Francis from the Bass Coast Shire provided a general overview of the progress of the preparation of the business case to determine the cost, requirements and viability of the vehicle and passenger ferry service between Stony Point, French Island and Phillip Island. The report was looking at four possible sites. There would be 10 sailings a day, 14 in peak times and the capacity of the ferry would be 30 vehicles, 2 coaches or articulated trucks and up to 300 passengers. The Council will consider the endorsement of this proposal in the near future and further community consultation will no doubt occur.

South Gippsland Shire and Bass Coast Shire provided an interesting “Virtual Tour” to round off day one, showcasing places of interest across the Shires and various transport projects. A lot of work went into this production which was very well received.

Gippsland Ports CEO Mr Nick Murray on day two provided an interesting presentation on the role of Gippsland Ports and outlined some exciting opportunities for the Region in commercial shipping and development. There is great diversity in emerging developments with some of the largest investment in Gippsland’s history. There are also some serious impediments that need to be addressed and the strong need for the development of a Government and Community strategy and policy to manage this growth.

This was followed by an impressive presentation from Mr Michael Knowles and M/S Leatrice Treharne from “Cube Logistics” outlining their role in the import and export industry and supply chain

across Australia. They have a real commitment and vision for the Region and highlighted the opportunities and challenges in the future growth and development of Barrys Beach, South Gippsland.

Mr Stewart Carson, General Manager Manufacturing, Supply and Logistics and Procurement from "Burra Foods" in Korumburra provided a detailed report on the growth of the business, the diversity of products and the logistical challenges and constraints to freight movement in and out. Although not a huge company they are key players in the market. They have over 60 milk tankers on to the small site on a continuous cycle, plus shuttle trucks, refrigerated trucks and other trucks delivering consumables. They "value add" with the production of powdered milk, infant formula, cheese and other dairy products. These products are used in the manufacture of ice-cream, yoghurt and domestic cream products. They process over 300 Million litres of milk a year and produce in excess of 60000 tonnes of product at the Korumburra plant. Burra Foods has offices in Melbourne, Japan and Hong Kong. There are significant transport freight movement challenges to their business.

During the course of the two day meeting reports were received from Transport for Victoria, VicRoads and RMS NSW, along with reports from the visiting delegates and members outlining developments and the progress of priority projects. These reports will also appear on the SEATS website.

The SEATS Petition has been out and about since the beginning of November and closes at the end of February. It draws attention to the poor condition of sections of the Princes Highway and the need for urgent on-going funding. It seeks to have the Highway recognised a major Freight and Tourist route and requests official recognition under the "National Land Transport Network Act 2014", to help secure much needed additional funding. Councils have been very supportive and the petitions have been available in their customer service centres and tourist information centres. The petitions will be collected, collated and presented to the Federal Government in due course. Thank you to all of you who assisted with this process.

SEATS Submissions and letters of support for project funding- a submission was made to the NSW Government on Future Transport 2056 and a number of requests for letters of support for funding of various projects across the Region have been provided. This is an important part of the advocacy work SEATS does for its members. Please contact the Executive Officer when assistance is required.

A detailed financial report was provided by the out-going Treasurer Mark Burnett. This role will be filled by Cr Graeme Middlemiss and managed by Latrobe City Council. Graeme will also continue in the role of SEATS Secretary. Mark was sincerely thanked for his great contribution to SEATS as Treasurer and member of the SEATS Executive. Best wishes to Mark and his family for the future. Cr Denzil Sturgiss from Goulburn Mulwaree Council was elected to fill the vacant NSW Executive position.

SEATS appreciated the thorough preparation by the South Gippsland Shire and Bass Coast Shire for this Conference and in particular thanks Mr Ken Frazer and Mr Peter Francis and their staff. The next SEATS meeting will be hosted by Shellharbour City Council on the 17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> May. The August Meeting to be held in Victoria on the 16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> August will be hosted by Baw Baw Shire and the November meeting on the 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> will be hosted by RMS Southern in Wollongong NSW. With the first meeting for the year now gone I am inviting Councils interested in hosting a future meeting in 2019 to contact me so planning can get underway. Let me know if you can host.

Through its various subscriptions SEATS receives up to date information and regular announcements which are passed on to the SEATS members to keep them informed. Please visit the SEATS website as well to view copies of various presentations if you do miss a meeting or want to follow up any presentation and of course the terrific SEATS Newsletter is available to share. Our Strategic Transport Network document is also readily available along with other studies and important material.

Victorian State Elections- with the elections to be held in Victoria later this year SEATS will soon begin preparing its Election Policy with priority projects identified so support can be canvassed from candidates across the Gippsland Regional electorates when they nominate.

John Duscher  
SEATS Executive Officer