

## Chronicle of Events 2009

### Leadwest Contributed to ‘Evaluation of Connex Stakeholder Strategy’

LeadWest’s CEO participated in a key stakeholder evaluation to measure the quality of Connex’s relationship with individuals and organisations. In particular, the evaluation looked at four key dimensions of relationships: trust, commitment, satisfaction and mutuality of control.

### LeadWest CEO Met with VU and Swedish Local Government Delegation Visiting Melbourne – February 2009

LeadWest provided a briefing on regional development issues to a visiting delegation of Swedish Local Government Officials. Victoria University facilitated this visit which enabled the Swedish delegation to look at best practice examples of local government service.

### Tour of the Port of Melbourne – March 2009

LeadWest Directors and members participated in a boat tour to gain a better understanding of the Port of Melbourne Corporation’s pivotal role in underpinning the growth of the Victorian economy. As Australia’s busiest port, the Port of Melbourne has been undertaking significant expansion and upgrade of its major shipping channel into the Port to support more efficient ships being able to use the port facility.

### LeadWest and HealthWest to sign MOU

LeadWest and HealthWest have partnered in signing a MOU in an effort to develop a coordinated approach in addressing the significant health challenges facing the residents of Melbourne’s western suburbs. Planning for the formal signing ceremony of the MOU is well

underway and is hoped will include participation by Minister for Health, Nicola Roxon.

### LeadWest CEO and Council CEOs Met with Federal MPs representing the West – March 2009

Western region Councils, with the support of LeadWest, developed a priority projects list which was delivered to western Federal MPs (including Hon. Julia Gillard, Hon. Nicola Roxon, Hon. Brendan O’Connor and Hon. Bill Shorten) on the 18th March. Covering the West’s key imperatives - jobs growth, health & community services, regional & local infrastructure, transport and environment - the visit reinforced the message that given the rapid growth taking place, existing services were being stretched and urgent funding was needed to support improving existing and development of new infrastructure assets and community facilities.

### LeadWest Participated in Western Suburbs Freight Forum 27th March 2009

LeadWest partnered with the Western Transport Alliance to advocate to the State Government in order to secure greater detail as well as indications of time frames around the corner stone project proposed that will have an impact on Melbourne’s west.

A Forum looking at the impacts of “Victoria’s freight futures” on the western suburbs was held in Altona on 27<sup>th</sup> March. The WTA secured speakers drawn from the State Government, Port operators, transport and logistics companies to address issues of great interest to western suburbs stakeholders and provide an update on key infrastructure developments planned and proposed.

### LeadWest Annual Directors Western Region Strategy Workshop – 22 April 2009

LeadWest Directors held a half day workshop to review LeadWest operations and develop its operational priorities for 2009/10. In view of the rapidly changing business climate as a result of the global financial crisis, a review of priorities was canvassed to reflect the growing concerns around jobs and the general state of the western region economic landscape.

### LeadWest CEO Met with Learning & Innovation West

Stakeholders representing the education sector in the west met with LeadWest to develop strategies and secure media attention on the highly important education and skills agenda in Melbourne’s western suburbs. With economic conditions and employment levels likely to be impacted negatively, the case for a heightened focus on skills development was seen as requiring strong government support.

### LeadWest Supported Western Region “Business Plan” Awards Organised by VU

LeadWest supported VU in organising the Western Region Awards, designed to encourage the entrepreneurial process. The competition developed with teachers in the region will provide prizes to participating students who demonstrate excellence in the development of innovative business plans. The initiative has the strong support of industry leaders in the Western region of Melbourne.

### **LeadWest Participated in Western Suburbs Water Forum with Min. Tim Holding**

LeadWest's Chair and CEO participated in a Western Suburbs Water Forum at which Minister Tim Holding outlined the State Governments "Our Water Our Future: the Next Stage Water Strategy". Key topics included water desalination, water pipeline projects and water saving initiatives.

### **LeadWest's Annual General Meeting – April 2009**

LeadWest held its Inaugural Annual General Meeting on April 29<sup>th</sup> 2009 which proved to be a huge success with very positive feedback.

The event was held at the ClockTower Centre in Moonee Ponds and was well attended with over 30 attendees from both Council and non Council Members as well as interested stakeholders.

Having now completed its first year of operation since its Launch in April 2008, LeadWest has built a strong position in the region as an active advocate for western suburbs imperatives and successfully positioned itself at the centre of the key issues facing western region communities.

The AGM passed the recommended Constitutional changes, proposed to enhance the clarity of the Constitution and enable the smooth operation of the organisation. The presentation by guest speaker, Mr. Brian Haratsis, Managing Director for MacroPlan Australia was also well received.

### **Melton Business Awards to Acknowledge Excellence- April 2009**

LeadWest partnered with Melton Shire and participated as a judge of the Melton Shire Business Awards. The Awards designed to recognise business excellence and encourage and support business development in the rapidly growing Melton Shire, have been well received

and attracted a large number of quality applicants across a wide range of categories

### **LeadWest Participates in Education Workshop at Sunshine Senior College**

LeadWest's CEO supported Western Chances in an education workshop held at Sunshine Secondary College. With the involvement of Orchestra Victoria, over 80 students from the western suburbs were able to further develop skills by performing with professional musicians acting as coaches and mentors. The program is one of six similar education workshops held across Victoria with Melbourne's western suburbs being the first such event.

### **LeadWest to Sponsor "Energise Enterprise 2009" Initiative to Grow Western Suburbs Business**

Leadwest has partnered with western suburb Councils in supporting the holding of "Energise Enterprise 2009". After a similar highly successful event in 2008, the impetus was evident to grow this important business development event to underpin the development and growth of local jobs in local communities.

The event has already attracted over 150 key western suburbs businesses and stakeholders with approx 200 being involved by the events staging in mid Aug 2009. The venue of the 2009 event will be Moonee Valley Racing Club.

### **LeadWest Participates in Maribyrnong City Council Community Plan Deliberations**

LeadWest's CEO participated in a Community Forum looking at developing the broad parameters of the Community Plan for the Maribyrnong Council precinct. As a community undergoing significant transformation with significant demographic and ethnicity changes, the development of an inclusive Community Plan was a priority.

### **LeadWest Convened "Federal & State Government Budget Briefing" on 15th May**

LeadWest secured the Hon Bill Shorten, Federal Parliamentary Secretary for both Disabilities & Children's Services as well as Victorian Bushfire Relief together with Hon Martin Pakula, Victorian Minister for Industry & Trade & Minister for Industrial Relations to provide a briefing on the implications of their respective budgets for the communities of Melbourne's west.

This significant event was held at Moonee Valley Council Offices on the Friday 15<sup>th</sup> May and proved most successful with over 100 attendees drawn from regional councils and stakeholders.

### **LeadWest Briefing of Western Melbourne MP's**

LeadWest Chairman, Hon Ralph Willis and CEO, Anton Mayer, briefed Western Melbourne State Government MP's on the latest undertakings of LeadWest and its members and outline operational priorities for 2009/10.

### **LeadWest participated in China / Victoria Wide – "Opening Doors to Export" Forum**

LeadWest participated in an Australia / China Business & Investment Forum held at Melbourne Town Hall on the 14th May 2009. Opened by Hon Martin Pakula, Minister for Manufacturing & Export, the event attracted over 100 businesses with a number from Melbourne's west. Representatives were also present from both Brimbank and Melton Councils.

### **LeadWest attended Dept of Transport briefing on Regional Rail project & Metro Rail Tunnel**

LeadWest, along with key western Melbourne stakeholders, attended a briefing by the Dept. of Transport on both the \$4.5 billion Regional Rail Link Project as well as the proposed Metro Rail Tunnel. This major piece of transport infrastructure will be a catalyst

to support the further growth and economic development of Melbourne's west. It is proposed that LeadWest will host similar such briefings on these projects in the west.

### **LeadWest Participated in Western Melbourne Tourism Launch**

LeadWest joined other western region tourism stakeholders in supporting the launch of the new Melbourne's West "Official Visitors' Map". The event attended by over 70 key organisations was supported by the Hon Steve Bracks who is now the patron of the Western Melbourne Tourism Alliance.

### **LeadWest Seeks Government Support for Initiative to Support the Creation of New or Additional Business Capacity**

Leadwest sought government views on whether the present joint Federal / State initiative to support the creation of new or additional business capacity via the SA Innovation & Investment Fund and the Geelong Innovation & Investment Fund, would become a template for other regions wishing to secure the growth of sustainable new jobs and creating new or additional business capacity into areas particularly adversely impacted by looming "business closures".

The Western suburbs of Melbourne have been adversely impacted by the impacts of globalisation over recent times and of course now much accelerated on the back of the global financial crisis. Rising unemployment levels brought about by a number of significant plant closures in the western suburbs have added to the socio economic malaise of this region. As such LeadWest believes a case could be made for such regionally focused business stimulus funds to become the template for driving the innovation agenda for manufacturing elsewhere and that such a program should be created for Melbourne's western suburbs.

### **LeadWest Seeks Government Support for Local Employment Co-ordinators**

The Prime Minister recently announcement that the Federal Government was looking at appointing Local Employment Co-ordinators to marshal training, infrastructure and Jobs Fund investments to maximise job opportunities in local communities hit hardest by the effects of the global recession. To support this the Government is providing \$20.8 million for Local Employment Co-ordinators to work in regions and communities affected by higher unemployment and job losses.

The seven regions already identified were determined by using a range of labour market and social indicators with further regions to be identified and hopefully Melbourne's western suburbs will be amongst those additional regions. LeadWest has written to Min. Brendan O'Connor trying to secure for the western suburbs of Melbourne just such an employment coordinator as it was not in the initial seven regions identified.

These Local Employment Co-ordinators will be doubly important as they will also work with the identified communities to access funds under the \$650 million Jobs Fund and to develop projects that will create employment, training opportunities and deliver new infrastructure and services.

### **Investment in the West – ongoing (site to go live end August 2009)**

LeadWest is looking at providing potential investors with information on regional opportunities via directing internet traffic from Invest Victoria's website.

Invest Victoria will assist LeadWest in securing internet traffic to LeadWest's website that would list five key projects in the region. From there it would be possible

to drill down further for information about a particular project by clicking to a link taking them to the individual Council's 'Business & Investment' pages. It was seen as an inexpensive and proactive step taken to assist our region with acquiring new business investment.

### **Western Region Education & Skills Conference 2009**

LeadWest, in partnership with Victoria University, and other key western region education and training sector stakeholders, will stage a Western Region Education & Skills Conference in the third quarter of 2009.

The issue of skills and raising education standards was seen as a key regional imperative in the LeadWest Business Plan 2008 / 2009 and a key underlying theme of the LeadWest Western Agenda.

The western region has the lowest rate of tertiary qualified graduates in metropolitan Melbourne. The skills shortfall in this area requires local employers to import approx \$2.8 billion of high end skilled staff. In addition the west faces low school retention rates and the highest youth unemployment rate in metropolitan Melbourne.

A concerted effort needs to be made to raise education and skill levels in the region so as to better improve future employability and improve student access to a range of education facilities.

LeadWest has secured Hon Julia Gillard to deliver the keynote address at the upcoming Western Region Education & Skills Forum scheduled for 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2009. Raising the overall education & skills levels of the residents of Melbourne's western suburbs is vital in addressing the jobs/ local employment imperatives so vital in underpinning this rapidly growing region.

Other speakers at the Forum include The Hon Bronwyn Pike MP, State Minister for Education, Prof. Elizabeth

Harman, Vice-Chancellor Victoria University, Ms Sharan Burrows, ACTU President and Mr. Wayne Kayler-Thomson, CEO VECCL.

### **LeadWest joins with the Committee for Melbourne**

LeadWest has joined Committee For Melbourne in order to promote regional imperatives of mutual interest. The Committee For Melbourne, with its strong membership base, will add additional weight in supporting LeadWest's public policy advocacy for western communities.

### **International Student Safety and Welfare**

LeadWest, through CEO, Anton Mayer issued a press statement which expressed its concern at the recent spate of attacks on international students and welcomed the collaborative approach agreed on by Education and Training Ministers to improve the international student experience in Australia.

### **LeadWest joins Western Councils and Stakeholders on "Harmony Train"**

LeadWest joined with western regional councils, Victoria University and other key regional stakeholders in holding a public demonstration to support multiculturalism. Representatives boarded the "Harmony Train" from the western suburbs into CBB Melbourne to support the State Governments Harmony Walk.

### **The Age – Special Supplement focusing on Melbourne's West**

LeadWest is coordinating the production of a special weekend issue supplement in the Age newspaper focusing on Melbourne's West. The overall theme will be along the lines of Melbourne's West – "A great place to live, work, educate, invest and visit" and would touch upon all the key themes highlighted in LeadWest's Western Agenda and aim at changing some of the misperceptions held of the western region.

### **LeadWest Sponsors "Energise Enterprise 2009" and the Business Now Expo**

LeadWest has agreed to provide sponsorship support to the Energise Enterprise 2009 program as well as act as the Small Business Victoria Host organisation for the western region. The highly successful Business Now Expo was attended by over 200 small business operators from across the region.

### **LeadWest lends its support to Victoria University on State Government Review of the Education and Training Reform Act.**

LeadWest supported Victoria University in their endeavours to have Skills Victoria review the Higher Education legislation they are conducting that potentially has negative implications for VU operations. The educational disadvantages and low aspirations for many of the West's communities is well documented and it is essential that the premier education institution for the West, VU, can operate efficiently and align its operational activities with its governance, reporting and funding requirements in order to maintain high standards and educational outputs for the West.

### **Melbourne's North/West accorded Priority Employment Area Status**

Melbourne's North Western Melbourne (Vic) has been included in the Priority Employment Areas announced recently by the Federal Government. LeadWest has been actively advocating for the west of Melbourne to be included as a region to be accorded status as a new Priority Employment Area in order to receive increased support for jobs.

### **Submission to the Growth Area Authority on the Revised Melbourne Urban Growth Boundary**

LeadWest provided feedback on the State Government's draft review of the UGB. Being able to offer our growing population a choice of affordable housing options,

delivering on the complex and multi faceted transport needs of people and businesses and creating sustainable and meaningful employment opportunities will be vital in supporting communities. Delivering all this whilst protecting our highly valued open space and biodiversity and ensuring infrastructure and services are in place and ready to support communities as they grow will be a key challenge indeed.

### **LeadWest advocates for Dedicated RDA Office for Melbourne's West**

Regional Development Australia (RDA) is an Australian Government initiative that aims to bring together all levels of government to enhance the growth and development of regional Australia. RDA will be supported by a network of committees across Australia, which will build on and replace the Australian Government's existing network of Area Consultative Committees (ACCs).

In Victoria RDA will be supported by Victorian Government agencies such as Regional Development Victoria (RDV). There will be nine RDA Committees for Victoria, generally aligned with the Victorian Government administrative boundaries. Four of these will be located in metro Melbourne – West, North, South East and East. The State Government intends to have a combined office to serve the west and north and is in favour of locating this office in the north of Melbourne.

LeadWest views this intention as disadvantaging the western region and has written to Hon Jacinta Allan, Minister for Regional Development, supporting the establishment of an RDA/RDV office to be based in Melbourne's west to support economic development and jobs creation initiatives in areas of high population growth.

**Meeting with Local Employment Coordinator - July**

LeadWest CEO met with Mr. Michael Reardon, the interim Local Employment Coordinator to the North-Western Melbourne at the LeadWest offices in Maribyrnong.

**Securing NBN Headquarters in Victoria**

LeadWest has written to key Federal Government Ministers supporting the Victorian bid to headquarter the newly formed NBN Co. LeadWest believes that basing the new NBN entity headquarters in Melbourne will ensure NBN rolls out more quickly and cost effectively than would otherwise be the case given the strong ICT industry business base located in Victoria.

**LeadWest participated in Vision for Werribee Plains (V4WP) Workshop**

LeadWest CEO participated in a workshop hosted by DSE to review the aims and operations of the V4WP funding program to date and recommend improvements for the second year.

**Climate Change Taskforce**

LeadWest's Chair and CEO participated in a Committee for Melbourne Forum on Climate Change.

**LeadWest CEO addresses EDA Mid Year Forum**

The EDA Midyear Networking Forum was attended by over 50 economic development practitioners from across metropolitan and regional Victoria.

**LeadWest attends VECCI Infrastructure Forum**

LeadWest has joined business, community and government leaders in looking at Victoria's key infrastructure imperatives driven by Victoria's growing population and the need to maintain the State's economic competitiveness.

**Future of Australia's Digital Economy**

LeadWest CEO has written to all members providing current thinking on the strategic direction of the digital economy in Australia.

**LeadWest participates in Western Transport Alliance**

LeadWest CEO provided input into the WTA Forum of the west's transport imperatives.

**Victorian Engineering Excellence Awards 2009**

LeadWest CEO participated in the Victorian Engineering Excellence Awards. The awards celebrate the achievements of some of Victoria's most successful engineers and recognize, reward and encourage engineering excellence across the categories of innovation, industrial development and manufacturing, environment and sustainability, infrastructure and technology.

**"Shaping Melbourne" Project – August 09**

LeadWest CEO participated in the "Shaping Melbourne" forum convened by the Committee For Melbourne and chaired by the CEO of Vic Urban which was designed to develop a blueprint to support Melbourne's growth to a city of 10 million residents.

**LeadWest supports WAGA in their response to the Victorian Climate Change Greenpaper**

LeadWest provided WAGA with details on Germany's Industry and Investment guidelines in respect of Climate friendly investments. Victoria has an MOU in place with Germany and the guidelines will greatly assist policy formulation.

**Launch of Shire of Melton Economic Development Strategy**

LeadWest's CEO joined other key Shire of Melton stakeholders and business leaders at the launch of the

Melton Economic Development Strategy by the Hon. Julia Gillard.

**LeadWest supports WPC Group at Inaugural Graduation Ceremony**

WPC Group Ltd is a major western suburbs, not for profit group training organisation specializing in the employment & training of apprentices and trainees. LeadWest CEO officiated at the graduation ceremony for apprentices and trainees drawn from across Melbourne's western suburbs.

**State Government Review of the Education & Training Reform Act- August 2009**

LeadWest attended a key stakeholder roundtable hosted by the Hon. Jacinta Allan, Minister for Skills & Workforce Participation at the Victorian University campus in Melton. The key focus was on tertiary education provision in outer urban areas as a priority issue.

