

BUSTER BULLETIN

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Red Tape Busters feature on A Current Affair

Our Director, Shane Bowering, has again featured on Channel 9's A Current Affair program. Shane was asked to appear 2 weeks ago highlighting how he resolves major issues with Council and Government. The story detailed the drama one of our clients experienced while trying to demolish the existing house on their land and to build a new house. The Saunders owned a property in Beachmere, Queensland and the house on the block was in a poor state. The Saunders approached Council to demolish the house. Approval was given by the Council and the house was demolished. In the meantime the Saunders had filled the land in preparation of Council approving the building plans. All was going smoothly but then problems with Council started to raise their head. The Saunders had submitted the plans to Council for approval to build the new house but after 9 months of waiting they had heard nothing from Council at all!

The Saunders contacted us seeking our assistance. I immediately wrote to Council identifying that I now represented the Saunders and asking for an update on why the plans had not been approved. Despite Council initially endorsing the filling of the property, they suddenly backtracked and decided to NOT approve the filling that had already been completed. Confused? So was I! So the plans were held up because they were not happy with the filling of the land. After weeks of negotiation and explaining that Council staff had already verbally advised that they had approved the filling, we had to advertise in the local paper and seek approval of all the neighbours that the land could be filled (again remembering the land at this stage was already filled). The neighbours agreed and no public complaint was received by Council following the advertisement in the paper. It now seemed like we should have smooth sailing. Unfortunately Council had other ideas!

Council suddenly decided that they needed to take a large part of the northern boundary of the property as a drainage easement. Why they needed an easement was anyone's guess given this property was only slightly higher than the neighbours and the whole area as far as the eye could see was flat as a pancake. Council suddenly decided they were going to take this piece of land for the easement however when I wrote to Council stating they could buy the land at market value as per the requirements of the Acquisition of Land Act, Council suddenly decided that an easement was no longer necessary and finally gave formal approval for the building plans and the filling. The Saunders have since built a wonderful house looking over the water. Sad to say that without Red Tape Busters this house would have only been a dream.

Specialists in:

- *Government and Philanthropic Funding*
- *Tender Writing Services*
- *Government & Private Sector Liaison*
- *Town Planning and Land Resumption Advice*
- *Business & Strategic Planning*
- *Job Application Writing Services*
- *Business Support Services*
- *Sponsorship Proposal and Event Management*

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Successes

This month we have again had some fantastic successes having won tenders for clients in the following fields:-

- Security
- Construction
- Ground/Property Maintenance
- Health

We also were successful in winning one of our long term clients, Chancellor College, \$30k from the NAB School First Impact Program. A very happy client indeed!

Importance of Search Engine Optimisation to Enhance Marketing

Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) is the key tool for the website owners to get more traffic to the website. Optimisation of a website is crucial to maintain a website's rankings with the search engine. The main aim of the search engine optimisation is to get more traffic from diverse sources and to get repetitive visitors.

SEO plays a crucial role in online business websites as well as other interactive sites. With regular update of content on website, SEO helps to get more traffic. There are other ways like link exchange and subscribe to RSS Feed that are more crucial parts under SEO work.

Based on specific keywords SEO, can generate good traffic and ultimately increase revenue for business owners. It is crucial to maintain the ranking position of your website on search engines like Google, Yahoo and others. An effective Search Engine Optimiser needs to look for the new keywords and work on specific key words to get new traffic. Many SEO tools are useful to get article or text submission automatically. Practicing website optimisation with ethics is vitally important. There are many Search Engine Optimisers who are using shortcuts to get a better results but this is a flawed long term strategy. The ultimate goal for the business owner is to realise a significant increase in traffic to the website and therefore an increase in turnover as a result of a maximisation of results from the SEO work.

Why is a robust advertising campaign essential to recruiting quality staff?

An effective advertising campaign is vital to recruiting high quality staff. Without a far reaching strategy – how else will quality staff know that you have a job open to be filled? Depending on the size and reputation of your organisation, using the business name as a marketing tool is a great way to attract applicants. Large corporations like HP, BHP Billiton and Microsoft always capitalise on their brand to attract the world's best talent.

If your organisation is small, this is still a great option because your market niche may be small and job seekers who are seeking work within your industry probably already know who you are. Also using your business name in advertising for an employee also helps by default in marketing the business. The principles of marketing suggest that a prospective client needs to see your business name 7 times before they “buy” so while you might be seeking new staff – advertising your business name can also assist in growing the business.

More often than not I see employers advertise vacant positions without mentioning a word about who they are and what they do. Remember, many job seekers may not know who you are and this may be a great opportunity to promote your brand. If your recruitment and advertising budget is large, why not insert a logo or invest in making the advertisement more creative.

A job title that is clear and effective will always attract the most job seekers. If you are vague about the position you are advertising, then you may miss out on an opportunity to find the right applicant. Also, never insert requirements into the advertisement that are not described in the position description. If there is something important like a skill or a qualification that you need from the applicant and it's not in the position description, you may be sending the wrong signal to the job seeker market and your recruitment campaign will not succeed.

Recruitment advertisements that exclude job tenures and time fractions send signals to prospective employees that you are only recruiting to create a pool of applicants. In many countries, this practice is illegal. Including the job tenure allows applicants and job seekers to actively target their job hunting campaign. You never want to be in a situation where the successful applicant declines your offer because they thought you were offering a full-time and ongoing position, when in fact you may have been offering a part-time ongoing position.

We will expand more in our next newsletter with more recruitment tips.

Effective Committees in Not For Profit Organisations

Typically committees don't work well for many of the same reasons boards don't function effectively: the lack of long-term agendas, reliance on poor or incomplete information, and the failure to distinguish between board level and operational issues. Therefore committees can benefit from many of the same approaches that make board meetings more effective: an overview by the committee chair at the beginning of each meeting, a strategic focus for discussions, prioritised agendas, annual calendar of committee meetings and major decisions, consent agendas, and evaluation of committee meetings. One of the main problems with NFP's are that committees from year to year have the same position types and generally the same people filling those positions. For instance a non profit might have been operating since 1970 with the following Committee – Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, Publicity Officer, Membership Officer.

Times in 2012 are very different to what was required in 1970 so why do we have the same position titles. Today there is probably a need for a Social Media Marketing Officer, Media Liaison Officer and/or an IT Coordinator to name a few. So each year the members should review the constitution and organisational structure and determine if changes should be made to the Constitution/Committee makeup and enact such changes accordingly. Once a Committee structure is set then a written position description needs to be developed for each position.

The description should summarise the purpose of the committee position, the requirements/roles to be filled and the skills/qualifications required. Really it should read just like a position description for a salaried position. Volunteers often hold these positions however the requirements of the position are just like a job where each person needs to know their role and undertake the tasks of the role with clarity and enthusiasm. Next month we will look at the role of the Chairperson.

Tune in!

Don't forget to tune into our Director Shane Bowering every second Thursday between 10am and 11 am on Brisbane Radio 4BC as he takes listeners calls with Greg Cary and on Saturday mornings with the zany Danny Hoyland on River 94.9FM. Obviously if you are not in Brisbane you will be able to hear Shane live via the internet.

New Website, Twitter and Facebook here we come!

Please have a look at our new website, we can be contacted via admin@redtapebusters.com.au if we can help you with anything. Also please don't forget to like us on Facebook – Red Tape Busters and to follow me on Twitter – simply follow RedTapeBusters.

Grants

Following is a small sample of grants that are available in different states of Australia. We can assist our clients access grants, find grants, develop project concepts and apply for grants.

Grant:	Community Support Grants (Victoria)
Funding:	Various
Closes:	Ongoing
Purpose:	To investment towards community infrastructure and amenity, and local innovative initiatives to boost local skills development and participation. The Community Support Grants Program (CSGP) aims to build resilient and adaptable communities with:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• improved community infrastructure, facilities and services• improved community connections• communities taking action on their own behalf

There are 3 funding categories available.

Funding range of grant includes:-

- Community Infrastructure projects up to \$500,000
- Community Infrastructure planning up to \$30,000
- Community Initiatives projects up to \$50,000

The Community Support Grants program will not fund:

- Activities that are the primary focus of other Government programs
- Cash prizes or commercial gifts
- Conferences and/or overseas travel
- The purchase of land
- Routine or ongoing maintenance activities, for instance maintenance of existing footpaths and walking tracks
- Organisations that have failed to abide by the terms and conditions of previously provided grants funded by DPCD
- Activities having a negative impact on existing businesses and services that will operate in competition with other local commercial interests (refer to National Competition policy)
- Initiatives seeking retrospective funding or projects that have already started
- Where duplicate services are in operation or planned for in a targeted community
- Recurrent operating costs, for example rent and utility costs, and/or projects establishing expectations of ongoing funding
- Projects that focus on achieving political or religious outcomes
- Repair of facilities damaged by vandalism, fire or other natural disasters where the damage should be covered by insurance
- Computer hardware/software and related ICT equipment.

Who can apply: These guidelines apply to projects supporting Victoria's metropolitan communities only. Eligibility depends on the type of grant that is being sought.

Grant: *Sidney Myer Fund - Poverty and Disadvantage*

Provider: The Sidney Myer Fund

Funding: Max per grant: \$10,000

Closes: Ongoing

Purpose: To help create a good society by promoting justice and equity. Through the Poverty and Disadvantage Program, this program aims to address underlying problems that give rise to poverty and disadvantage, and to find ways to strengthen systems, services and communities to prevent impoverishment and to reduce its impact.

Large Grants Program - The Sidney Myer Fund aims to assist in the area of Poverty and disadvantage with its Large Grants Program focusing on:-

- Rural and Regional Australia.

Please note, that unsolicited applications are not accepted to the Large Grants Program.

Small Grants Program - This small grants program supports strategies to benefit Australian communities. The aims are to:-

- Alleviate the negative effects of poverty and disadvantage
- Demonstrate new ideas about how to address poverty and disadvantage
- Strengthen communities' abilities to deal with poverty and disadvantage.

Priorities: The current priority areas for the Poverty and Disadvantage Small Grants Program are as follows:

- Communities experiencing social and economic exclusion with particular emphasis on Indigenous Australians, asylum seekers and refugees, and people living in isolated rural and remote areas of Australia
- Children and young people from impoverished backgrounds whose opportunities for development and advancement are curtailed
- Small, discreet projects that meet the needs of a community rather than supplementary funding for large projects. A small, discreet project will be considered to have a total budget of up to \$50,000.

Limitations: The Myer Foundation and Sidney Myer Fund do not provide grants directly to individuals or unincorporated bodies.

Grant: *Crime Victims Financial Assistance*

Funding: Various

Closes: Ongoing

Purpose: To provide financial assistance to victims of crime in certain circumstances. The Victims Register is a Northern Territory Government initiative that was established to address the concerns of victims of crime. The Victims Register is a database that enables the Crime Victims Services Unit to provide victims of violent and sexual crimes, or other concerned persons with certain information about the offender(s). It also allows victims to make written submissions to the Parole Board in relation to the relevant offender. Information you provide will remain strictly confidential and will only be held on the Victims Register. Access to this information is strictly limited to staff with a genuine and essential need to have such access and will not be available to offenders or other persons.

When can you register?

You can apply to be registered after the offender is sentenced for the relevant offence or before the offender is discharged from the sentence.

What information can be provided to victims of crime?

- the location of the offender at the time of registration, and any subsequent transfers;
- the offender(s) security classification at the time of registration;
- the result of any leave applications e.g. work release, home visits, re-integration;
- suspended sentence order (SSO) information, including date of release under SSO, the conditions of the SSO, any variation, revocation, cancellation or discharge of a SSO;
- parole information, including earliest possible date of release, date that parole Board is to consider release on parole, actual date of release on parole and any conditions of parole that are considered relevant to the victim ;if the offender dies whilst in custody.

A registered victim or concerned person may, however, enquire at any time as to the following information on the offender(s):

- transfer to another prison in the Northern Territory;
- status of security ratings or any change in the status;
- courses or programs being undertaken for the purposes of rehabilitation;
- any approved leave of absence from prison.

Who can apply: The following persons are eligible to be registered in relation to an offender:

- the actual victim of a violent or sexual offence;
- a legal guardian of the actual victim if that victim is a child or suffers from a disability.

Applications for registration may also be made as a concerned person, but registration will be subject to meeting certain criteria, including but not limited to the following:

- a person who has been nominated by the victim to receive information on their behalf;
- a primary care-giver or family member;
- a person against who the offender has a history of using domestic violence;
- a person who has substantial concern with the relevant offence.

You do not have to live in the Northern Territory to apply to be included on the Victims Register.

Grant: *Veteran and Community Grants (Old)*

Funding: Max per grant: \$50,000 Min per grant: \$2,000

Closes: Ongoing

Purpose: To maintain and improve the independence and quality of life of members of the veteran community by providing financial assistance for activities, services and projects that sustain and/or enhance well being. The objectives of V&C Grants are to:

- promote and enhance healthy lifestyles, particularly physical activity and mental well-being
- support quality independent living at home
- encourage involvement in community activities
- reduce social isolation
- contribute to social inclusion and access to community activities
- encourage supportive and safe communities
- increase access to community services
- address gaps in local services, and
- support carers.

Limitations: Applications will not be considered from:

- individuals
- organisations seeking commercial gain from the project
- organisations contracted to DVA for the provision of Veterans' Home Care or other services requesting funding for any activity related to that contract, or
- organisations or projects receiving Home and Community Care program funding for a specific service type that are requesting V&C Grants funding for the same service type.

Who can apply:

To be eligible for a V&C Grant, an applicant must:

- be an ex-service organisation, veteran representative group, community based organisation or private organisation, and
- demonstrate the ability to contribute to the welfare of members of the veteran community through the proposed project.