

Red Tape Busters

May 2014



Newsletter

Inside this Issue

- Grants
- Tenders
- Organisational Development
- Lobbying
- Employment Support

Specialists in:

Government and Philanthropic
Funding

Tender Writing Services

Government and Private Sector
Lobbying

Job Applications/Resumes

Business Support Services

Shane Bowering - Director
PO Box 3126
WARNER QLD 4500
Phone: 07 3882 2055
Mobile: 0402 210 664

www.redtapebusters.com

admin@redtapebusters.com.au

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2014 is rolling and so are we!

Welcome to the June edition of our newsletter for 2014. Throughout the year we will endeavour to give you an insight into grant writing, tender writing, lobbying, organisational development and employment support strategies and concepts.

This year besides giving you tips and hints into our services and strategies that we implement to achieve success for our clients, we will also introduce our team throughout the year just so that you can have more knowledge about who we are. Also to each Newsletter this year I am adding a section which I will call Bowering's Blurb. This will just be a small commentary I will make each month about something topical.

I hold no political allegiances at all and this won't be a forum for political grandstanding but I would like to offer hopefully what you might find something thought provoking in each issue. You might well totally disagree with my perspective

and that is fine but as I said hopefully I might have given you something to think about – maybe a different perspective.

Feel free to challenge my perspective on the Red Tape Busters Facebook page - <https://www.facebook.com/RedTapeBustersShaneBowering> or follow us on Twitter – Red Tape Busters.

We have also changed the format and content of our newsletters. We now will just have one newsletter but readers will clearly be able to see each distinct focus area so that readers can quickly go straight to the information they want to read.

We obviously want our newsletters to be interesting and informative and as such if you have a story or an issue that you would like covered-please let me know and we will do our best to discuss it in an upcoming issue. We welcome your feedback and look forward to you passing on our details to family, friends and colleagues to have them sign up for the free newsletter.

Grant Writing

Recent Grant Writing Successes

Following is an overview of some of our successes over the last few weeks. As you can see funding is available for a variety of different projects:-

GREATER WESTERN SUBURBS AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL CLUB INC.
PURCHASE EQUIPMENT
\$16,883.00

AEIOU FOUNDATION - CAMIRA
INSTALL SHADE SAIL
\$18,486.95

AEIOU FOUNDATION – HERVEY BAY
PURCHASE PLAY EQUIPMENT
\$2,921.40

AEIOU FOUNDATION - BUNDABERG
PURCHASE PLAY EQUIPMENT
\$3,948.02

AEIOU FOUNDATION – SIPPY DOWNS
PURCHASE PLAY EQUIPMENT
\$6,086.10

AEIOU FOUNDATION – BRAY PARK
UPGRADE OUTDOOR PLAY AREA
\$15,000.00

MATES 4 MATES
PURCHASE EQUIPMENT
\$3410

CRAIGNISH GOLF CLUB
PURCHASE TRACTOR
\$34,892

CARBROOK GOLF CLUB
UPGRADE TOILET AND SHOWER FACILITIES
\$31,818

CABOOLTURE GLIDING CLUB
TRAINING CENTRE COSTS
\$24,086

GOLD COAST ROLLER DERBEY
PURCHASE OF EQUIPMENT
\$10k

MYALL PARK BOTANICAL GARDENS
UPGRADE KITCHEN
\$15,971

TOOWOOMBA SENIOR CITIZENS AND WELFARE ASSOC
RENOVATE FACILITIES
\$28,636

WESTS CRICKET CLUB
UPGRADE FACILITIES
\$94,000

BRACKEN RIDGE LITTLE ATHLETICS
UPGRADE LIGHTING
\$88,000.

I was recently contacted by a small non profit organisation who we had worked for before and they wanted to know if we could get them funding for lighting for their tennis courts. We had previously received funding for them to upgrade their fencing, for a strategic plan and to build a deck off their clubhouse. After identifying the cost of the lighting and the length of time since our last success with this organisation I was convinced they would be successful with an application. I discussed this with one of the committee members and asked him to just check with the Treasurer that they did not have a contract yet to have the lights installed and had not paid any deposit. The committee member came back to me saying that a contract was already in place AND a deposit had already been paid. As a result this made the project ineligible for funding through the program I had identified and more to the point I firmly believe this struggling tennis club had essentially “wasted” \$18k given I was convinced they would have been successful with an application.

Obviously in the grant writing world there are simply no guarantees of success but after being an ex public servant for 18 years and now in running this business for 14 years I think I have a unique insight into grants and the probability of funding which really is second to none. So I firmly encourage businesses and non profits to thoroughly research grant opportunities before proceeding with costly projects. There just might be funding out there which could in fact save you a motza! I bet that tennis club would rather the \$18k was in the bank or at worst be able to spend it on a second project if the lights had of been funded as I believed was highly likely.

Funding Is Getting Tight But Still Available

Many organisations have felt the full brunt of Government cutbacks in funding and through austerity measures put in place at the State and Federal Government levels. Just remember essentially this is all part of the political game. New Governments come to power talking tough and make significant financial cuts to “prove” their economic credentials in the first year after entering the halls of power.

This is all spin and while the cuts are real and essentially make life tough in the community and especially for non profit organisations through reducing Government funding in year one

– the time will come just as the sun rises that that particular Government will want to get re-elected in three years. That means the pours strings will open a bit in year two generally and in year three, money will become much freer to access. Unfortunately this means that for 12 to 18 months we have to do it very tough but stay strong and be positive because funding opportunities will certainly increase late in year two of the political cycle and certainly in year three when the Government needs to create an environment where people forget how tough they were in year one.

Opportunities for funding are still out there though – even in tough economic times. So undertake thorough research and look at all possible areas of funding whether it be Government, Council, Corporations or Philanthropic Trusts and Foundations.

Grant Opportunities Available to Non Profits

Following are examples of grant opportunities available at different times to non profit and community organisations:-

Survive and Thrive Grants

The Foundation provides grants of up to \$30,000 to a large number of charities each year within six key impact areas: Homelessness, Youth, Ageing, Environment, Community & Preventative Health and Arts & Heritage.

Overview

Grants are provided for the following areas of support:

- Critical operational support and development
- Maintain or increase service provision
- Meet an acute gap in service provision
- Start-up funds for an emerging social enterprise

Survive & Thrive Grants are available to organisations who are working in one of the Foundation's six key Impact Areas.

Grants are generally provided for projects delivered in the Greater Melbourne area, however some grants are made in other regions of Australia based on requests by the Foundation's charitable fund account holders.

Anzac Centenary Local Grants

The Australian Government's Anzac Centenary Local Grants Program assists and encourages communities across Australia to undertake their own Anzac Centenary projects that commemorate the service and sacrifice of Australian servicemen and women in the First World War.

The Anzac Centenary Local Grants Program is a key element of the Australian Government's Anzac Centenary program through which funding of up to \$125,000 is available for each Federal Member of Parliament (MP) to support projects in their electorate commemorating the First World War.

The Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) is responsible for administering the program.

Community Grants Program – NRMA Insurance

The Community Grants program supports upstanding people who have outstanding ideas to make our communities safer, more sustainable and better prepared to respond to emergencies.

Overview

The program is about recognising and showcasing the great work hundreds of grassroots organisations undertake in our communities each year. Since launching the program in 2003, we have invested over \$5.8 million into more than 1,400 projects around Australia.

We provide funding in four different categories, so it's important to make sure your application is suited to one of our four category descriptions.

Crime Prevention

Initiatives suitable for this category include projects that increase safety and security in local communities by reducing the opportunity for crime, or by targeting persons at risk of becoming criminal offenders. Initiatives also considered are ones that change the attitudes and practices of people around the protection of property, people and workplaces. Examples include educational initiatives aimed at increasing safety and reducing vulnerability to crime for people in their home or local communities, and early intervention projects that target 'at-risk' youth.

Road Safety

Initiatives considered will be projects that seek to change behaviours on the road and reduce the likelihood and severity of road incidents. Preferred initiatives are projects that are based on evidence either from a previous project or have a sound theory that aims to create a positive safety impact and will most likely lead to behavioural changes. Examples include education projects that, based on evidence, are contributing to changing driver behaviour in 'at-risk' groups; and initiatives that increase awareness of the importance of road safety among specific groups of road users.

Emergency Readiness and Response

Initiatives suitable for this category will focus on creating awareness about the importance of preparation and response to minimise the likelihood or severity of incidents in and around the home or local community during major natural perils or hazardous incidents. Preparation, prevention and hazard minimisation programs that aim to build community resilience and reduce damage to property and/or people during storms, fires or other hazardous situations; as well as projects that focus on disaster or emergency response and/or recovery activities will be considered.

Environment

Initiatives appropriate for this category will raise awareness and/or promote community engagement with environmental sustainability activities. Preference will be given to projects that demonstrate strong environmental education outcomes; promote environmental stewardship and directly engage communities in on-ground activities; as well as those that help to increase community resilience and decrease carbon emissions.

Examples may include energy, waste and water audits or reduction projects and initiatives that enhance and preserve significant natural assets.

The People's Choice Award

The People's Choice Award is an optional competition providing grant recipients with the opportunity to double or triple their grant funding. It is about celebrating and showcasing the great work that projects are doing in their communities. The People's Choice Award will be decided by an online popular vote between Tuesday 1 July and Thursday 31 July 2014 Community Grants Program – NRMA Insurance.

Community Heritage Grant

The Community Heritage Grants (CHG) program aims to identify Australian cultural heritage collections which are publicly accessible, locally held and nationally significant.

Cash grants of up to \$15,000 are provided to assist in the preservation and access to these collections. Organisations may apply for more than one project provided the combined value is no more than \$15,000, and all projects can be completed within one year.

The program is funded by the Australian Government and managed by the National Library of Australia, with support provided by the Attorney General's Department through the Ministry for the Arts; the National Archives of Australia; the National Film and Sound Archive; and the National Museum of Australia.

Grants are open to not-for-profit, incorporated organisations that:

- owns or manages a collection of nationally significant material;
- is accessible to the general public ('access' can be for research, via the Internet, or on temporary or permanent exhibition).

Other organisations, such as public libraries and independent museums located within universities, may also be eligible to apply.

Community Sport Enrichment Scheme – WA

This program helps country Western Australia experience and conduct major sporting events and sport development initiatives. Up to \$25,000 is available through this program.

This program aims to:-

- utilise the attraction of influential elite sports people for development of sport in country towns.
- conduct high profile sporting events in Western Australian country regions.
- use regional venues to present the highest level of international, national and approved state sport league sporting activities.
- create opportunities for country people to meet and to see high performance Australian and international sportspeople perform in competition in their region.

- influence participation in sport by people in country towns outside of major regional urban areas through association with influential elite sport role models.
- create opportunities for country people to meet influential elite sportspeople and be influenced by them to strive for higher personal goals through sport and physical activity participation.
- provide capacity building opportunities for country sportspeople to receive training in skills and methods in sport performance.

Indigenous Governance Awards

This grant encourages, rewards and promotes best practice in Indigenous governance. Up to \$20,000 is available through these awards.

The national awards highlight success in Indigenous Australia-strong leadership, good management, effective partnerships and brave, creative thinking. The Awards have been running since 2005.

There are two award categories:

- Outstanding examples of Indigenous governance in Indigenous incorporated organisations;
- Outstanding examples of Indigenous governance in a non-incorporated initiative or project.

In each category, we're looking for governance that demonstrates:

- Innovation
- Effectiveness
- Self-determination and leadership
- Cultural relevance and legitimacy
- Future planning and governance resilience.

To be eligible for the Awards, the majority of your governing body or decision-making group must be Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

Grant Opportunities Available to Businesses

Export Market Development Grants – ACT (Program under consideration following the budget)

EMDG encourages small and medium sized Australian businesses to develop export markets by reimbursing up to 50 per cent of eligible export promotion expenses above A\$10,000 provided total eligible expenses incurred amount to at least A\$20,000. Businesses in every State and Territory are eligible to apply.

This program:-

- encourages small and medium sized Australian businesses to develop export markets;
- reimburses up to 50% of eligible export promotion expenses above \$10,000 provided that the total expenses are at least \$20,000; and
- provides up to eight grants to each eligible applicant.

To access the scheme for the first time, businesses need to have spent \$20,000 over two years on eligible export marketing expenses.

Any Australian individual, partnership, company, association, co-operative, statutory corporation or trust that has carried on export promotion activities during the year for which they wish to apply for an export grant is eligible to apply.

To be eligible the business must have promoted one of the following:-

- the export of goods and most services
- inbound tourism
- the export of intellectual property and know-how
- conferences and events held in Australia.

Early Stage Commercialisation – Tasmania (Program under consideration following the budget)

Repayable grants are available between \$250,000 and \$2 million over two years. Applicants need to match funding on a 50:50 basis. Businesses in every State and Territory are eligible to apply.

This program provide repayable grants to assist innovative companies to undertake activities that enable a new product, process or service to be developed to the stage where it can be taken to market.

The program will fund activities associated with the systematic work necessary for installing and establishing processes, systems and services that enable a new product, process or service to be effectively brought to market.

Types of eligible expenditure are:

- Labour expenditure
- Contract expenditure
- Plant expenditure
- Prototype expenditure
- Intellectual property protection expenditure.

Eligible applications will be assessed against the following five criteria:-

- need for funding
- commercial plan and potential
- market opportunity
- management capability
- national benefits

This program is available to innovative companies and an applicant must be one of the following:-

- a non tax-exempt company incorporated under the Corporations Act 2001;
- an individual who warrants to form a non tax-exempt company incorporated under the Corporations Act 2001 if the application is successful.

Grow Your Business Program - Victoria

This program aims to provide advice and support to assist Victorian firms to develop and implement strategies to become internationally competitive.

The Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development offers a range of planning and management services and advice and support to assist Victorian firms to develop and implement strategies to become internationally competitive.

The Grow Your Business program includes:-

- Grow Your Business - Business Development Plan
- Grow Your Business - Business Strategic Review
- Grow Your Business - Business Development Plan - Mentoring
- Grow Your Business - Group Programs
- Grow Your Business - Networks Program

To be eligible for individual funding businesses should:

- be financially viable
- be a tradeable service
- be based in Victoria
- have a commitment to innovation and/or potential for export/import replacement
- have management strengths
- be committed to strategic planning and growth.

Small Business Solutions – Queensland

The goal of this program is to enhance the business skills, profitability and growth of small businesses across Queensland. Small Business Solutions provides small business owners the opportunity to get real business assistance from accredited industry professionals.

In addition to one-on-one coaching from qualified mentors in their workplace, SBS also offers small business owners access to:

- Vocational Education and Training Qualifications through Skills Recognition; plus
- Tailored Training Events for specific small business needs.

Innovation Voucher Program – South Australia

The Innovation Voucher Program (IVP) encourages collaboration between small to medium enterprises (SMEs) and research and development organisations.

Vouchers are awarded to research and developers to help SMEs, without the necessary resources, solve technical problems and to encourage greater innovation within the manufacturing sector.

Between \$10,000 and \$20,000 is awarded on a competitive basis to eligible research and development projects that partner SMEs with an annual turnover of less than \$20 million. Funding of up to \$50,000 is considered on a special case basis (see the program guidelines for details). A funding contribution is required from the SME and the amount depends on annual turnover.

Eligible research and development businesses include public research organisations and companies that provide services for research, development and design. Research and development services for projects include, but are not limited to:

- technical research
- design development
- design validation
- prototype testing
- the development of innovative production processes.

Tourism Business Development Program – Northern Territory

Free, confidential business information services are provided to new and existing tourism businesses in the Northern Territory.

The program assists tourism businesses to enhance their products and services, increase their competitiveness by improving their knowledge, identifying potential partnerships and coordinating educational tools.

Tourism business development officers work with tourism businesses across the Northern Territory to identify and help address business and industry needs, and provide appropriate advice and assistance to access various business development programs. Officers are based in Alice Springs, Darwin, Katherine and Tennant Creek and deliver services to tourism businesses in all regions of the Northern Territory.

Small Business Grants – City of Perth WA

Funding from \$500 to \$2000 is available through this program which aims to offer cash grants to small businesses within the City of Perth. The grants may be used to assist with business startup or expansion, buying equipment or for other business related projects.

The program aims to:-

- Support and encourage small businesses.
- Encourage innovative and creative small business projects.
- Support businesses that demonstrate a notable benefit to the city's people and/or business communities.

Tender Writing

Tender Writing Successes

Some of our recent successes in the last month include:-

- Electrical Contract work for major Council projects;
- Static and Mobile Security;
- Lawnmowing/Landscaping;
- Earthmoving;
- Plant Hire;
- Playground Equipment;
- Construction; and
- Swimming Pool Management.

Tenders – A Strategic Approach

Successful tender writing requires a strategic approach from the tender writer to achieve success. There are many aspects to consider in applying for tenders and even before you do apply. It is vital before a company or non profit entity charges in and lodges a response to a request for tenderers that they carefully analyse the requirements of the tender plus their ability to prepare a robust response AND most importantly their ability/capacity to deliver if they in fact their response is successful. Preparing a tender can be very costly in staff time, hiring a specialist tender writer like Red Tape Busters or in costs incurred in having the response prepared, printed and collated etc.

Before deciding to prepare a response you should consider when it closes. Do you have the time, resources, skills required to prepare a comprehensive response? You should also obviously consider the Selection Criteria and if you can prepare detailed responses to these and include past examples of your experience or capacity to handle this type of contract previously. This is really important – where possible you need to refer to existing or past contracts which are similar to the scope of this tender in order to provide proof that you can deliver on contracts of the specifications and extent of the tender you are thinking of applying for. So it is essential that you spend preparation time in putting together initial thoughts on how you will respond to the Criteria and what examples you can bring to the “argument”.


You also need to consider your pricing – can you make a profit and win the tender or do you want to take a “loss” on price to essentially to get a foot in the door and win the contract with a view to proving your value and experience to set you up for other opportunities? Remember if your pricing structure is not highly competitive, you simply won't be much chance of winning the tender.

The key issues to be considered in determining if you should apply for a tender is your ability to deliver and does it fit within your organisations strategic goals and drivers. This requires you to critically analyse the business to identify if you have the staff, resources and capacity to deliver an outstanding result if you were awarded the tender. The reputation of your organisation will be badly damaged if you win a tender and can't complete same or fail to deliver. Further this could open you up to litigation as well – obviously to be avoided at all costs. As identified it is vital that pursuing a tender opportunity or indeed opportunities is considered in light of your overall Business Plan and strategic imperatives. Does it fit with your overall business objectives and support the outcomes you have identified for your long term growth?

Only once you have undertaken these pre-tender considerations can you make an appropriate decision to pursue tender opportunities. Should you need assistance with tenders or grants contact Red Tape Busters via our website – www.redtapebusters.com or telephone 07 38822055.

Tender Opportunities

Following are some examples of tenders currently open across Australia:-

Information Technology Broadcasting and Telecommunications – Internet Services	19/05/2014 12 noon
Building and Facility Construction and Maintenance Services	21/05/2014 12 noon
Excess or Obsolete non Capital Material Disposal and Sale Services	21/05/2014 12 noon
Farming and Fishing and Forestry and Wildlife Contracting Service – Tree Maintenance and Planting	28/05/2014 12 noon
Public Utilities and Public Sector Related Services	02/6/2014 12 noon
Management and Business Professionals and Administrative Services	04/06/2014 12 noon
Building and Facility Construction and Maintenance Services – Pole Audits and Inspections	06/06/2014 12 noon
Provision of Illuminated Street Signs	26 May 2014
Real Estate management - Commercial	03 Jun 2014
Real Estate management - Residential	03 Jun 2014
Canal Dredging 	03 Jun 2014
Road and Intersection Upgrade 	25 Jun 2014
Supply of Wet Plant, Truck Hire and Services	30 May 2014
Preferred Supplier Arrangement for the Provision of Hire of Plant, Fleet and Equipment	27 May 2014

Organisational Development

Organisational Mentor

As a successful business owner who set up this business from scratch in May 2000 I have had to navigate the minefields that are out there for business owners. I have been able to market my businesses without the need for advertising and yet I have been able to be very profitable since day 1. I believe firmly in living to work not working to live. I will be looking at helping business owners to streamline their business, increase turnover and profits while maximising the work/life balance. Regular sessions where we discuss your business are generally ideal but I can meet whatever needs you may have, whether that be weekly, fortnightly, monthly or quarterly. It is all about just taking the time to meet and chat and get support and ideas which will assist you. I also will be working closely with non profit organisations to help their committees to run the organisations more effectively. In our sessions we will discuss the following:-

- Financials and Cash Flow
- Business, Strategic and Financial Planning
- Cost Effective Marketing
- Market/Member Development
- Product/Service Development
- Staff Recruitment and Retention
- Importance of Quality Customer Service
- Policies/Procedures and Quality Control
- Performance Review and Training.

If you believe talking one on one with someone who understands both the business and the non profit sectors and who understands your challenges might be beneficial – give me a call on 07 38822055.

Importance of Policies and Procedures

Workplace policies are statements of principles and practices dealing with the ongoing management and administration of your organisation.

Policies act as a guiding frame of reference for how the organisation deals with everything from its day-to-day operational problems or how to respond to requirements to comply with legislation, regulation and codes of practice. It is important that policies are reasonable and that employees and stakeholders are aware of these and clearly understand what the policy is trying to achieve. Policies identify the focus and commitment the organisation places on ensuring staff comply with documented requirements. Procedures support the organisation's policies and provide more detailed information on specific workplace practices and duties.

We believe organisations should have in place the following policies/procedures:-

- Code of Conduct
- Induction
- Workplace Health and Safety
- Environmental Management
- Training and Development/HR
- Accident Management
- Work Method Statements
- Complaint Management.

We can also assist our clients to develop informal Quality Systems and supporting relevant documents as well as Induction/Safety Booklets.

Employment Support

Assessing Suitability Before Applying

At Red Tape Busters we are specialist job application/resume writers given we have been in the job application writing business since our Director Shane Bowering worked in the public service for over 18 years. During this time, friends and colleagues in the public sector used to ask Shane to write their resumes and job applications given he was known in the Departments of Transport and Main Roads as the job application writing/resume/interview king.

When Shane commenced Red Tape Busters in May 2000, he started the resume/job application writing part of the business and initially continued on assisting public servants. Since that day we have been overwhelmed with people across Australia seeking assistance in getting an interview and then in winning that job. We have worked on jobs from cleaners to scientists, from labourers to police officers, from hospital wardsman to medical specialists and all jobs in between.

Our expertise in this field is extensive and we approach our task very differently to most of our competitors. Our initial task is to identify if we believe the client has the skills and experience to apply and do we think they will be a reasonably genuine chance of succeeding. If we believe the client does not have the required skills or experience or in our view cannot meet some of the key requirements for a particular job we will advise them of this and be honest but respectful in our assessment. We believe it is far better for us to be honest and give such advice than to overlook the client's shortcomings, take their money and prepare documents that will be quality documents but there the required outcome – ie an interview will be very unlikely to result.

In assessing a client's skills/abilities and prospects in relation to a specific job we obviously need to assess the requirements for the job and also review the client's existing resume or job history. In this way we can ask further follow up questions of the client in order to clarify any possible questions we might have. At this stage we are not interested if the Resume is of the required quality, although most clients wrongly believe they have a great Resume, we are just solely focussed on assessing if in our opinion the client should pursue preparing an application whether that be by engaging our specialist service or preparing an application themselves.

Once we have made our assessment we then advise the client. We will never just prepare an application without completing the suitability assessment process first. If we believe the client has reasonable prospects of winning an interview we then will provide a quote to complete the work. In preparing a quote, we will consider the extent of work required ie Cover Letter/Resume/Response to Criteria, the complexity of what is required ie how many Criteria and then the seniority of the job involved. We try and ensure for junior or lowing paying jobs we try and keep our rates to a bare minimum given people in these situations clearly need someone to help them onto or up the work ladder.

If anyone needs a specialist job application writer or needs to hire a business highly experienced in job application writing across virtually all industries then please contact us at Red Tape Busters – www.redtapebusters.com or on 07 38822055.

Lobbying

Benefits of a Good Lobbyist

Most individuals, small, medium and large businesses and even non profit organisations have a need to use a genuinely skilled Lobbyist at some stage when confronted with a dispute with the local Council, Government agency, Telecommunication provider, electricity provider, bank, builder etc. Lobbyists really have received some well-earned bad publicity lately.

The political nonsense that has been going on between Lobbyists and their political mates is simply a disgrace.

I have NO political affiliations; I am not a member of any political party and I DO NOT mix in those circles. I am independent and rely on my skill to get results – not who I know.

Most people when confronted by a problem with Council or Government or with their builder immediately think of a Lawyer or Solicitor and look to the legal fraternity as the best method of effectively representing their interests.

There obviously is a place for Solicitors and Lawyers when faced with legal issues that need to proceed through the court process and where legal action is the only way of having the matter effectively resolved. However to me, legal action should be the very last course of action for one very good reason. Councils and Government agencies have far deeper pockets than the average punter and so to me the only time you want to consider challenging Government agencies through the courts is when you have a situation that based on legal advice your case is rock solid. “Rock solid” cases however are few and far between and even if it is “rock solid” that doesn’t mean a judge is going to have the same view so my suggestion is to be very careful if you decide that legal action is the best course to take given it could prove a very very expensive exercise.

So instead of hiring a lawyer which will cost you a princely sum no doubt, if you have a problem with Government or Council you need to ponder on hiring someone with negotiation skills and experience in the public sector and try and mediate an effective resolution that meets your needs. A skilled Lobbyist should be able to mediate an outcome that might not exactly meet all of your needs but is something you can live with. Of course if the Council or Government agency’s case is based on solid legal foundation then they have no reason to mediate but a skilled Lobbyist will still get you the best outcome possible because they will have excellent negotiation skills together with an ability to read and interpret legislation, town plans and by-laws and their relevant requirements.

Arguing or being in dispute with Government/Council agencies or in trying to resolve a dispute with a high powered company is generally complex and can be highly emotive as well as very stressful. Most individuals and businesses generally try to take on Council or a Government Department themselves and emotion normally gets in the way and prevents clear rational thinking. This is again where a Lobbyist can provide great value to you by taking the stress out of the matter – negating the emotion and thinking strategically about the best possible way to try and get a resolution to the matter at hand.

Implementing the right strategy and attacking a problem the right way is crucial to achieving a good outcome. Developing an effective strategy to take on Council, a Government Department or some multi national company obviously will depend a lot on the type and complexity of the problem at hand but a good Lobbyist will be looking to validate or disprove the agencies position by reviewing relevant legislation, town plans, by-laws, identifying information and documents through Right to Information provisions, looking for precedent and by actively engaging with the key players and decision makers in the agency. Lobbying is a highly developed skill and unfortunately the complexity of red tape enveloping our lives means that if you really want to get the best value out of a Government or Council problem that you should look to engage a specialist Lobbyist to assist you. I believe my experience as an ex public servant and now through running my business Red Tape Busters gives our clients a unique insight into how to battle Government agencies, Councils and businesses of all types and sizes and to get the very best outcomes for our clients.

Lobbying Success

At Red Tape Busters we are specialists in Government lobbying. I started this business some 14 years ago after 18 years in the Queensland public service. I worked in a variety of roles in the public sector but I probably specialised in interpreting legislation and policies and finding weak areas in said legislation/policies or in providing advice to the public with respect to their legislative requirements.

Initially in starting this business we delivered consultancy services to public transport companies (and still do) and prepared resumes and prepared complex job applications primarily for public servants (and still do) however over time friends started asking me to use my Government background to intervene in disputes with Government/Council agencies. The first big test of these skills came when Chris Jones, Director of QR Concrete, approached me complaining that the Department of Transport had put his truck mounted concrete off the road claiming it was over dimension/overweight. The truck had also been restricted to a radius of 25kms around Brisbane and Chris wanted me to get the truck back on the road and to try and get the distance restriction lifted.

Given I had some knowledge of the requirements for heavy vehicles to be used on roads as a result of my previous experience in the public service where I was Manager of many of our Customer Service Centres in Department of Transport I set about reading the current rules and regulations regarding dimensions/weights and also the rules with respect to the ability of the Department to limit the use of vehicles to a specific area. After researching the legislation and associated supporting policies I prepared written correspondence to the Department seeking clarification on some issues. This ensured that the Department had to commit to their position in writing. This strategy to me was important given it required the Department to set out their position and response to my queries in writing but it also enabled me some time then in being able to read the response and then to check the relevant legislation and policies to either confirm their position was correct or to in fact find holes in their stance.

With respect to the overweight/over dimension issues I was able to identify that if we increased the tyre sizes on the vehicle and re-distributed the weight on the vehicle by moving around some of the equipment and tool boxes we could ensure that the weight was better distributed over the axles and therefore the vehicle was now within the required weight limits. The over dimension issue was slightly harder to address but again by manipulating the body of the vehicle and making some very slight changes we were able to prove that the vehicle did in fact meet the dimension requirements for that particular type of heavy vehicle.

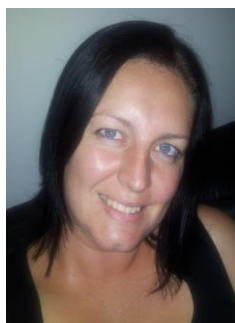
The issue regarding the vehicle being restricted to a 25km radius around Brisbane was much easier to correct. After reviewing the legislation and policies at the time I was able to identify that there in fact was no legislative instrument that supported the Department's position for the restriction and as such there were in no position to apply the restriction. The end result was that the vehicle was formally approved to be back on the road and the vehicle could now legally travel anywhere in Queensland. This proved to be a significant bonus to QR Concrete as a result of the income this vehicle could now generate from working on jobsites across Queensland.

Following the successful resolution of these issues Mr Jones suggested that this would be a great business idea – specialising in dealing with Government and Councils on behalf of individuals, businesses and non profit organisations. Initially I was not convinced that people would pay us to resolve their issues. However time has proven to be the better judge and I have now worked on issues as small as Council's garbage collector not picking up waste from bins at an industrial property as specified on their rates notice (I won the client a \$13k refund) to representing the Australian Citrus Growers and Riverina Citrus in negotiations with the Federal Government regarding tariff policy and then representing Riverina Citrus in Productivity Inquiry hearings into the citrus industry.

The last 14 years have been exciting and the diversity of issues I have dealt with have been mind boggling.

Government lobbying however is very adversarial and challenging and while I love the challenge, I have found that by diversifying our services where we now are specialist grant writers, tender writers and job application writers as well as specialists in organisational development and in preparing business plans, strategic plans and business and organisational policies and procedures really has given us a unique edge in the consultancy landscape.

New Team Member – Amber Brennan



Amber Brennan's skill set is vast with her greatest expertise revolving around the building and construction, finance, education and community services sectors. She has held positions in both government and private sectors, and brings a wealth of knowledge to us from her diverse career. Prior to Red Tape Busters, Amber worked as Project Manager for one of Australia's leading procurement consultants.

Within this role, Amber provided professional management in the cost planning, specification documentation, tendering and logistics of various projects. Amber contributed to projects for The Queensland State Library, QPAC, Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre, Griffith University Centre for Medicine & Oral Health, Brisbane Supreme & District Courts, Zayed University Abu Dhabi, and numerous SEQ Schools to name just a few. Amber's inside knowledge and extensive experience in issuing, evaluating and awarding tenders for these projects has equipped her with advanced skills in responding to the demands of writing outstanding documents for our clients.

Amber's previous experience working with various organisations in the education and community services sectors has allowed her to fully appreciate the importance of funding and grants in achieving and advancing each organisations mission, goals and objectives. Amber's high level of communication, analytical, problem solving and research skills will be greatly beneficial to Red Tape Busters and our clients. We look forward to Amber working with our clients and providing an important focal point in the Logan, Redlands and surrounding areas.

Farewell For Now Greg Cary

Since 2000 I have been very lucky to have featured regularly in the media and besides my segments on Brisbane radio on 4BC I have been fortunate to appear extensively on a variety of Brisbane based and national TV programs work including:-

- Brisbane Extra – very regular appearances over a number of years as an expert contributor including many live crosses;

- A Current Affair – many appearances over 14 years – some featuring the Red Tape Busters business exclusively and what we do – and many appearances giving viewers advice on how to resolve Council/Government/Consumer issues;
- Channel Nine News – a number of appearances giving viewers advice on how to resolve Council/Government/Consumer issues;
- Today Show - a number of appearances giving viewers advice on how to resolve Council/Government issues and all of these were live to air (I even had a regular weekly live segment for a while in I think 2002/2003);
- Small Business Show (Channel 9) – special feature on Red Tape Busters;
- Today Tonight – a couple of appearances giving viewers advice on how to resolve Council/Government issues;
- Channel 10 News - a couple of appearances giving viewers advice on how to resolve Council/Government issues.

However my most fortunate work in the media came through meeting Greg Cary - a true legend of Brisbane radio. Greg was an integral part of Radio 4BC from 1993 up until December 6 2013 and such was his standing that Greg was the most popular and best presenter on the station by far. Greg's listeners loved him and he is held in the highest esteem across the National media landscape. Greg is renowned not just for his skill as a highly professional and popular broadcaster but also as a very humble fair minded man with no political agendas and only one true focus as a broadcaster – to give his listeners a voice and to do all he could to help them through tough situations. Some people would also have seen Greg on Channel 7's Sunrise program where he has had a regular spot for a number of years. So he is well known across Australia not just Brisbane.

I was lucky to meet Greg in around 2006 I think although Majella Marsden from 4BC suggests it was much earlier. I made the bold step of sending Greg a “cold” email introducing myself and boldly asking if he might be interested in having a segment on his show where we could help listeners resolve problems with Government and Councils as well as with Corporations such as Telstra, Energex and in fact any consumer related issues.

Greg thought this was a great idea and for the next 7 years or so I was extremely lucky to be an informal and then formal contributor to Greg's show. For the last three or four years (the memory is struggling) I had a regular segment with Greg on his Morning Show. I really was blessed to be able to work with Greg. Greg trusted my instincts to come up with topical issues that listeners would be interested in and at the same time I took listeners calls live on air giving them advice and assistance as well as helping listeners off air. I also was so lucky to listen to Greg's wisdom and to pick up many tips on the art of talkback radio from a master. I really did enjoy my time and take great satisfaction in being able to give something back to the people who listen to Greg and by default me. I was also lucky that Chris Adams also wanted me on his Sunday morning weekend show on 4BC and so for a while I had a segment with Greg on Thursday's then again with Chris on Sundays.

It really was with great sadness that I received Greg's call last year to tell me he was leaving the station to take a well-earned sabbatical. I knew this was in the wind given Greg and I had forged a friendship and he had confided the prospect to me many months earlier. But it didn't soften the shock one bit. Greg rode off on that Friday 6 December 2013 for greener pastures. Hopefully he will get the passion to return to radio at some stage in the future.

Greg has been a fantastic supporter of mine now for these last 7 years – I owe him an enormous gratitude for asking me on to his show. I enjoyed every minute of my time with Greg, he truly is a fine gentleman and the atypical media type. Greg will be sorely missed at 4BC. I still have my segment with Chris Adams on Sunday mornings so if you are in Brisbane or on the web, tune in at 10.30 every Sunday – 1116 4BC on the AM dial! I am also in air every Wednesday night as well at 10.00pm with the golden voice Walter Williams. I am however looking forward to working with Greg again on air at some stage in the future.

Hopefully if he does something on radio he will bring me along with him for the ride. One never knows where the wind blows! But hats off to a wonderful mentor, friend and fantastic Australian!

The Bowering Blurb

I will never make these newsletters about politics but as I mentioned I have decided to add a small section each month to the newsletter where I can maybe offer an opinion on something topical that you might not well agree with but hopefully it will prove at least thought provoking. Come and join me on Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/RedTapeBustersShaneBowering> or follow us on Twitter – Red Tape Busters and let me know what your view is.

This month I want to float an idea I have which will rein in politicians pay while at the same time stabilise the payments to our disadvantaged and also which will stop the argy bargy between Unions and the Government when it comes to pay increases in the public sector including Police, Ambos, Nurses, Fire Fighters.

My idea is to have it enshrined in legislation that anyone on the public purse whether that be Politicians, Magistracy, public servants, unemployed, pensioners, etc etc will have future pay rises for the next three years limited to the average of CPI for the last three years. In this way Governments can clearly budget for future wage increases. Further it will stop the outrageous pay claims of our politicians but it will also ensure those on welfare who are doing it tough also receive regular and reasonable increases. At present those on welfare have to wait and wait to receive meagre increases which simply don't maintain pace with inflation. By enacting this pay increase process we will also put an end to the continual fight between Unions and Government over pay increases. The Unions won't be able to hold us over a barrel and the Government can't continually underpay our public servants, police or nurses.

Anyway that is enough for the Bowering Blurb this month – what do you think?

Just One Testimonial Of Thousands!

“On a number of previous occasions, we have discussed the process, outcomes and the support provided by you and your team in the development of the Round 4 RDAF submission for Hear and Say, however, I have specifically been asked by our Board to also convey their gratitude to you and the team.

The work done by you and Tanaz was of a very high quality and the flexibility and composure of the team was evident through the whole application process. I wish to reinforce the sentiments I have previously expressed in the Hear and Say testimonial and I reiterate that for me, the sign of a successful partnership is the willingness of both parties to re-engage.

Albeit our application was unsuccessful, I am confident that the team at Hear and Say and Red Tape Busters will eventually prevail and secure additional funding to help give deaf children the best start in life and the best opportunity to realise their full potential in the hearing world.

On behalf of the Hear and Say Board and the team at Hear and Say, thank you, and I look forward to continuing to work closely with you and the rest of the Red Tape Busters team.

*...-
Chris McCarthy, CEO, Hear and Say.”*

Red Tape Busters

admin@redtapebusters.com.au

www.redtapebusters.com

07 38822055, 0402210664

Twitter – RedTapeBusters

Facebook – Red Tape Busters

YouTube – Red Tape Busters