



Tasmanian Farmers & Graziers Association

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A Member Of The
National Farmers' Federation

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MEDIA RELEASE

TFGA supports Rural Alive & Well in Tasmania

The Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association has committed to supporting the program Rural Alive & Well in Tasmania with providing a vehicle for the Program Coordinator and Rural Support Officer. Rural Alive & Well in Tasmania is a program which aims to build the resilience and capacity of men, their families and the Community to react to challenging life experiences including mental health issues with a specific focus on suicide in the Southern Midlands and Central Highlands local government areas.

“Tonight at the TFGA conference Roger Swain, President of TFGA will hand the keys of a vehicle to John Jones, Chairman of the Rural Alive & Well Tasmania program. This vehicle is being donated to the program fully insured and registered by the TFGA for the Program Coordinator and Rural Support Officer – Mr Vyvyan Alomes to use.” Mr Oldfield, Acting General Manager said.

“The Rural Alive & Well Tasmania program is very grateful and proudly accepts the car from TFGA”, Mr John Jones said. This program aims to get out in the community and interact, having this vehicle allows for this to occur. Rather than people coming to us we are going to them.” Mr Jones said. “The program is a holistic approach focussing on the whole rural community.”

The TFGA has been involved in the steering group which included a diverse number of members from the community in getting the program up and running, said Mr Oldfield.

“Mr Julian Krieg, one of the keynote speakers at the TFGA biennial conference has been of tremendous assistance in supporting the committee to get this program operating.” Said Mr Jones. Julian from the Wheatbelt Men’s Health in Western Australia works extensively in suicide awareness and men’s holistic health. He had developed many successful programs and strategies for rural men, their families and communities. The Rural Alive & Well Tasmania program has been modelled from Julian’s experience.

The Tasmanian Suicide Prevention Standing Committee, which included four Legislative Councillors, put a report to the state government stating the urgent need for suicide prevention and that the State government must seek out preventative suicide roles. In Tasmania there are 50% more suicides than car fatalities, 80% of which are male.

“From 1978 to 2006 there were 1,985 suicides in Tasmania, these numbers are frightening” said Mr Jones. “That is why the State and Commonwealth Governments need to continue their support in programs such as these.” So far the Commonwealth Health & Aging Department has committed to one year funding and the state government has contributed \$145,000 to the following year.

The TFGA looks forward to working with the program and are committed to supporting the much needed program.

The Southern Midlands Council will hospice the program for 12 months.

ENDS

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Useful links:

www.tfga.com.au

http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/agency/pro/suicideprevention/documents/TSPSC_Report_2004-2006.pdf

<http://www.southernmidlands.tas.gov.au>