

Council a finalist in the national EDA awards

Council's recently developed Business Continuity and Resilience Program (BCRP) was a finalist in the Economic Development Australia (EDA) National Conference Awards.

It joined just over 20 finalists, with only four awards presented nationally.

"We didn't win, but we realised just how good it was just to be a finalist," explained Council's Coordinator Economic Development, Ken Fraser. "There are only four awards nationally and we were up against very big councils so effectively being runner-up was brilliant."

Following research into business continuity and crisis planning in South Gippsland and a successful Regional Development Victoria grant application, Council's Economic Development and Tourism department designed the CBRP. This has resulted in the economic strengthening of the business and broader community through raised awareness, knowledge and skills development surrounding disaster relief and recovery.

The highlight of the program was the formation of the Business Emergency Leadership Group (BELG) comprising six prominent regional business leaders. This partnership between community and government when tackling the before, during and after of emergency events was hailed as an innovative example in the field of economic development at the awards and it's a model Victoria's Emergency Management Commissioner, Craig Lapsley, said he wanted to emulate on his visit to South Gippsland recently.

EDA Chairman, Mark Holdsworth, said the awards, now in their eighth year, highlighted a myriad of unique projects being undertaken across Australia leaving the judges with some difficult decisions.

"The winners came from small communities through to major cities and highlighted that economic development does not have one size that fits all," he added.

The CBRP was also recently recognised at the Emergency Management Victoria Resilient Australia Awards among 23 statewide nominations.

"When we first started the program we were aiming to strengthen community and business partnerships in emergency management," Mr Fraser said. "This type of wide-spread recognition is testament that we are on the right track."

Caption; Coordinator Economic Development, Ken Fraser and Business Liaison Officer, Renae Littlejohn with their EDA certificate.

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