

You paid for the party – here's who came..

Description



Warrnambool City Council spent \$17,000 on a corporate hospitality tent at the May Races earlier this year. Image source: Source: Vince Caligiuri/Getty Images AsiaPac

OPINION

[dropcap style="color: #a5cecd;"] R [/dropcap]eaders will recall that [earlier this year](#) we revealed exclusively that the Warrnambool City Council spent \$17,000 on hosting a corporate hospitality tent at the May Racing Carnival.

Today we can tell you who actually attended.

While the WCC has not revealed the names of those who accepted an invitation, they have released to *Bluestone* the positions of the 97 people who attended, which make for interesting reading.

I say interesting because, as we noted in our first story, the hospitality event is intended to do a number of things including: show support for the May Racing Carnival; promote it to senior politicians, bureaucrats and regional leaders; to discuss “strategic projects” and, lastly, develop “organisation to organisation” relationships.

Yet the guest list reveals that, of the 97 attendees, almost half (45) were connected to council either as employees, councillors (and their partners), or as members of the council’s various advisory committees.



Of the guests who accepted invitations to the marquee, half were connected to council either as staff, elected members of through advisory committees. Image: REUTERS/Victor Fraile

[dropcap style="color: #a5cecd;"] W [/dropcap] **annon MP Dan Tehan** came along, as did all five **State Members for Victoria**, but of the nine senior government bureaucrats invited, only one – the regional manager for **VicRoads** – was able to make it.

Regional leaders made a better showing, with 10 representatives (including, I assume, some partners) of the **Great South Coast Board** attending, no doubt catching up with fellow board members **Mayor Michael Neoh** and Council chief executive **Bruce Anson**.

Opportunities to discuss “strategic projects” also looked very promising with the inclusion of 9 members of a **Changchun** delegation – Changchun being the Chinese sister-city to Warrnambool – but lost a little of its lustre when it was clarified that the delegation was one that would be travelling *from*

Warrnambool to China, not the other way round.

So did we, as ratepayers, receive \$17,036 worth of networking and promotional opportunities from this event, or should it be more correctly framed as an opportunity for the invitees to just relax and let their hair down? You can decide.

The list of acceptances is below, while [the full invitation list can be accessed here](#).

[box]

WARRNAMBOOL CITY COUNCIL MAY RACES HOSPITALITY MARQUEE 2014- ATTENDEES

1. WARRNAMBOOL CITY COUNCIL :

Warrnambool City Council Mayor & Councillors & Partners **16**

Warrnambool City Council Chief Executive, Directors & Partners **5**

2. STATE & FEDERAL GOVERNMENT POLITICIANS

Federal Member for Wannon **1**

State Members for Western Victoria (there are five in total) **6**

3. SENIOR STATE GOVERNMENT STAFF

VicRoads, Regional Manager **1**

4. REGIONAL LEADERS

Great South Coast Board Members:

Corangamite Shire **2**

Glenelg Shire **2**

Moyne Shire **4**

Three independent board members **2**

Wannon Water:

Managing director **1**

Chairman **2**

Education:

Deakin University, Head of Warrnambool Campus **2**

Regional Tourism Board Members:

Five independent board members **3**

Regional Tourism Board **1**

Barwon South-West RDA Committee:

Eleven board members **4**

Police:

Inspector Local Area Commander Warrnambool, Moyne, Corangamite Police Service Area **2**

Health:

CEO South-West Healthcare **2**

CEO Lyndoch **2**

CEO and President Western District Employment Access **1**

Warrnambool Cheese and Butter:

Chief Executive Officer **1**

5. GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS WORKING CLOSELY WITH COUNCIL:

Maddocks Lawyers **1**

Members of WCC Advisory Committees:

Audit Committee **6**

City Landscape Committee **2**

Livestock Exchange Advisory Committee **7**

International Relations Advisory Committee **6**

Flagstaff Hill Advisory Committee **2**

City Health and Wellbeing Advisory Committee **1**

Changchun delegation group (from Warrnambool to China):

10 members of delegation and partners: **9**

Commerce Warrnambool:

President 1

6. OTHERS

Cr Kelson's business associates 2

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1. Archive

Tags

1. invitations
2. marquee
3. May Racing Carnival
4. Warrnambool City Council

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