

Newsletter 3 – October 06

RASNZ Dark Skies Group

Welcome to the third newsletter of the Dark Skies Group of the RASNZ.

Dark Skies Lighting Award 2006

On Friday night 13th of October Jennie McCormick presented the RASNZ Dark Sky Award to **Ports of Auckland Limited** (POAL) at the Illumination Engineers Society of New Zealand Lighting (IESNZ) Awards 2006. The POAL relighting project at their Auckland port saw a 50% reduction in the number of lamps used, new shielded fittings and a 15% reduction in their total energy use for the port. This saving is equivalent to the energy used by 400 houses.

Jennie, with help from Marilyn Head, had previously judged the entries for the Dark Skies Award and has agreed to judge again next year.

The POAL lighting project went on to take the Overall Excellence Award for 2006.

For more information, and before and after photos of the port, go to: [Latest News](#) on the RASNZ DarkSkies web site.

IDA Conference in Sydney

The [First IDA Asia-Pacific Conference](#) is being held alongside the [Illuminating Engineering Society of Australia and New Zealand \(IESANZ\) Annual Convention](#) on 26–28 October 2006. The theme will be “Our Lighting Future”; allowing good opportunities for useful discussions about how we can better work together to practically improve the nighttime environment resulting in major benefits for everyone.

Check the [Conference Program](#) here.

Electricity Commission

The Electricity Efficiency Potentials Studies Briefing was held on 4 October 2006.

Duncan Hall attended these briefings.

The Electricity Commission has engaged Kema - a Dutch company that bought a US consultancy called Xenergy (?) - to construct a mathematical model of NZ electricity supply and demand.

The model will be constructed with the intention of understanding what kinds of "intervention" might best promote electricity efficient behaviours and result in benefits - e.g. \$ benefits - to society.

Duncan reported that he doubted that it was quite the right forum to talk about astronomical interests. *“I think it best if we somehow get the outdoor lighting efficiency message into the study at another time. So we should stay engaged”.*

Thanks Duncan.

The presentations from the Electricity Efficiency Potentials Studies Briefing have been posted on the [Commission's website](#). I recommend you look at the [IES Presentation](#) in particular

The 2007/08 Planning Round—Big Picture Input

The Electricity Commission has commenced its planning process for 2007/08 and is seeking comments on 'big picture' issues for the electricity industry. A submission has been prepared based around improving the energy efficiency of outdoor lighting and protecting the night time environment.

Ministry for the Environment

The Urban Design Protocol Action Plan monitoring survey

As a signatory to the NZ Urban Design Protocol, the RASNZ committed to an action plan. Our plan consisted of one main action point, “To raise the importance of the natural nighttime environment in the urban design context through identification and dissemination of information leading to efficient and effective outdoor lighting.”

The survey is designed to help MfE identify what's working, what's worth promoting and sharing among signatories, and where they can help support us collectively.

This survey has been completed by RASNZ.

Talk Environment

The Ministry for the Environment's flagship event is out on the road again from 27th October to 10th of November.

Senior managers and staff from the Ministry will be visiting regions throughout New Zealand to talk with business, community groups and local government about the work the Ministry is doing. Topics include water, waste, national environmental standards, environmental reporting and climate change.

Environmental issues that matter to you. If you have not yet registered for a Talk Environment Roadshow meeting near you, we'd love to see you there!

The Talk Environment Roadshow will be visiting 17 locations around New Zealand between **27 October – 10 November 2006**. You are invited to attend a meeting at: Auckland City, Blenheim, Christchurch, Dunedin, Gisborne, Greymouth, Hamilton, Invercargill, Napier, Nelson, New Plymouth, North Shore, Palmerston North, Queenstown, Tauranga, Wellington or Whangarei.

For details on meeting dates, times and locations, further information on topics, and to register to attend a public meeting, please visit our [website](#): or by calling freephone **0800 TALKENV (0800 825 536)**. These breakfast sessions are a good opportunity to get our message across to MFE and to other participants. Have a look to see if you can make it to an event. Book early as they do fill up.

What is ahead for our group?

I was asked recently if we are able to accept charitable tax efficient donations. This raises a number of issues for us to consider.

Till now RASNZ have directly paid for postage, membership of IDA, and are supporting my attendance at the IDA Conference in Sydney through the Kingdon-Tomlinson Trust.

Funds would be useful. There are other expenses we will face as our project develops, such as lighting standards, design and publication costs for brochures, CDs and certificates.

Pauline Loader, RASNZ Treasurer, has indicated that she would be happy to manage an account on our behalf. I think this would be a good idea so that all expenditure and payments are open to scrutiny.

Since the formation of this group I have been supported by people attending meetings, judging awards and offering ideas, examples of good and bad lighting, and alerts of related events around the world.

However for much of the time this is a one person work load. This is OK for now as much of the work only takes one person, e.g. making submissions and writing letters.

If this group progresses to publishing brochures and other practical functions then a more organised structure will be needed. Increased membership could follow as we gain

in profile. This increases the administration work.

I welcome suggestions as to where we need to grow, how it can be done, e.g. funding, who will do the work, and on other topics I haven't thought of.

Depending on the responses I receive to this invitation I may return more formally to this discussion for your support.

RASNZ DarkSkies web site changes.

Following the shift of the RASNZ Web site to the Royal Society of New Zealand's Web Server the new link for the DarkSkies Group site is [DarkSkies](#) See below also. Please update any links you have for this site. Note this address is case sensitive.

That's all for now.

Best regards,

Steve Butler
RASNZ DarkSkies Group
urbanstars@xtra.co.nz
<http://rasnz.org.nz/darkskies/>