

# Master Grocers' ASSOCIATION

Committed to our community.  
Committed to our employees.  
Committed to our industry.

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The Master Grocers' Association  
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Jennifer Flanagan CEO

*Our directors are all dedicated independent retailers running their own businesses and committed to our association for the benefit of the industry.*

*Our management team is dedicated to assisting members in the following areas.*

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It is with a certain regret that we see Mr. Geoff Gledhill stand down as President of the MGAV. Geoff has been a large part of my life here at the Association ever since joining in 1998, and I can honestly say that without the support and advice of Geoff and Angie I would not have weathered some of the more torrid storms that have presented themselves since 1998. Geoff remains as an MGAV Director, (as Immediate Past President), along with his duties as Director of the Packaged Liquor Trust Fund representing MGAV members. The MGAV Board, and particularly the staff, thanks Geoff for his friendship, professional service, and his absolute total commitment to the independent sector.

Our Golf Day was once again a great success, with winners being the CCA Team, the Jim Stynes group, and the Warrandyte IGA team. The real highlight for the day was welcoming Ron and Jan Allat who resumed their relationship with the MGAV Golf Day through a chance meeting with me in 2004. Ron Allat actually donated the impressive Selangor Pewter winner's tray many years ago, and we were honoured to have them attend our dinner and present the winners tray once again. The Allat family very generously made a \$1000 donation to the Reach Foundation, and enjoyed an evening of catching up with the trade. We sincerely thank them for their renewed support.

An important announcement is that of SANO Consulting joining the MGAV service offer, to advise and train on workers compensation issues - particularly when claims have blown out of control. Dr Paul Pers and Ms Natalie Dubrowin will be working with MGAV staff and members where specific claims need professional advice and management. I have tried to establish this service for almost six years, and we are excited to finally source a consultant service that fits our needs. See p16.

Land Tax is to be a major issue for MGAV members and in a recent meeting with Hon. Andre Haermeyer's office (Minister for Small Business) I went so far as to explain that in my view it is the issue that may bring about a change of Government next year if not addressed immediately, and fairly. This is an ongoing debate at the moment.

The new OHS Act comes into force on July 1 2005. It provides for fines of up to \$920,250 for employers who fail to provide a safe workplace, with the individual being liable for fines up to \$184,050 along with possible jail terms. It also provides for specified staff consultation, union right of entry, and now covers bullying, psychological health, fatigue and psycho-social hazards such as discrimination. See p12-13.

The Act requires the Government to establish a working committee to administer the Act and at the request of Minister John Lender's office, and also Andre Haermeyer's office, I have accepted a position on that committee representing small business. Discussions started last week centering on union right of entry to your workplace.

Recognising that this Act will have an enormous impact at store level, a proactive approach was needed, and so the MGAV set about writing a full six day course, and also offering a shorter four afternoon course.

*Out of 500 Victoria members eight people representing FOUR employers attended Day One. I am well aware that as July approaches and the publicity increases, we will be swamped with demands for education and training. The dates are set - it is all on our website. What have you done to inform and protect yourself?*

Choice of Superannuation also becomes effective on July 1. The Government will soon launch a \$20m campaign, with support from the various funds. This is covered on page 11. Please ring us if you have any questions. It will not affect your rank and file staff covered by any of the MGAV Agreements, or those sites in the Federal Shops Award. Those who will be covered by the coming Common Rule Federal Shops Award have different obligations and I will explain this by direct mail to those sites.

Be wary of salary sacrificing for Award /Agreement employees as there is a large body of case law that undoubtedly confirms that you are required to 'pay in cash' to the employee the full Agreement/ Award rates. Many employers have been caught with substantial backpay claims over this as they have allowed the employee to salary sacrifice.

As always, please ring us if anything in this edition raises questions or concerns for you.

Jennifer Flanagan CEO