



Photo – from left – David Boyle, Ritchies director, Fred Harrison, CEO & Malcolm Cameron, Chief Financial Officer

## The Ritchies 137th Birthday

Congratulations to the Ritchies group of stores who celebrated their 137th Birthday in early September with a wonderfully supported supplier golf day and luncheon at the Amstel Golf Club, along with a summary of the groups successes delivered by Fred Harrison, CEO.

The Birthday celebrations commenced with 90 people playing golf and then 180 people attending the celebration luncheon. Fred, as is tradition, took the opportunity to address the audience with the many successes of the group and importantly spent considerable time congratulating and complimenting the Ritchies management team and staff around the nation for their passion and commitment in helping Ritchies become the wonderful organisation it is today.

Fred disclosed that Ritchies stores were trading well with sales and profit well up on last year, as well as stating the group has made a commitment to significantly invest in store refurbishments now and into the future. Expansion into NSW and QLD has been robust with staff numbers significantly rising. In fact, by Christmas 07, the Ritchies Group will be close to employing 6,000 staff.

Ritchies have selected the following companies with the prestigious Supplier and Sales representative of the Year Awards.

- Liquor Supplier of the Year – Pernod Ricard
- Liquor Sales Representative of the year – Greg Broom, Lion Nathan
- Grocery Supplier of the Year – Unilever
- Grocery Representative of the Year – Simon Waterhouse, Victoria Foods
- Deli Supplier of the year – Dons Smallgoods
- Deli Sales Representative of the Year – Scott Lardner, Inghams

## New Laws Protecting Your Business Against Below Cost Pricing

Amendments to the Trade Practices Act are expected to become law in Australia within the next few months.

The new laws are intended to provide greater protection for small businesses against larger businesses who might misuse their market power. Of particular interest is the proposal that will prohibit companies with significant market share, from offering continuous low cost pricing on goods, with the intention of eliminating or damaging a competitor.

The law does prohibit companies with a substantial market share from engaging in anti-competitive conduct but previously they did not specifically refer to below cost pricing, making the law difficult to enforce.

The amendments to the Trade Practices Act will also prohibit a large company from taking advantage of its substantial market share in any market, not just the particular market in which the company is powerful.

The amendments have come about on the back of considerable lobbying by our industry. They seek to protect independent grocers from being squeezed out of the market by large chains financially equipped to sustain short-term losses in order to gain market control.

The bill must now go to the House of Representatives for final consideration. MGA is closely following the progress of the bill and will keep members informed of its progress. Log on to the MGA website for the latest developments.

## Know Your Web Access Code

Members are reminded that if you have not received your user name issued in the recent membership kits, please contact the office and we can re-issue it to you.

The web page is a vital link for a wide range of industry specific information to assist members with the day to day issues within our industry and has all the vital secure information that is required to meet compliance requirements.

