

CEO's Report



Since the last edition, there has been much activity in the grocery industry and at MGA. The team here has been very busy nationally on all fronts, advising members in all areas of workplace relations, making agreements, conducting retailer information forums, seminars and OH&S training courses, making submissions to both state and federal government bodies and attending various industry stakeholder meetings.

The March public holiday month is now behind us, which is a relief from the pressures of coping with three “short” weeks. Our Industry sector has reported strong and steady trading during the month of March.

Recently other interstate retailer associations have publicly announced changes to also offer workplace relations, training and representation services across Australia. After 100 years providing these services, MGA has not felt the need to publicly respond to this. It is important to note that MGA is dedicated to your one industry sector. MGA does not spread itself across all other forms of retail, but dedicates itself to making an industry-specific contribution to the ultimate success of all independent grocery and liquor supermarkets in Australia.

The theme of this edition of the MGA magazine is workplace relations and your business. How often have you heard that the people working in your business are the most important assets that you have? This issue contains a number of articles which stress the importance of store owners knowing the awards under which they operate, and utilising these awards to their fullest potential for the mutual benefit of both the employee and the store owner.

Please contact the MGA Workplace Relations Team with any workplace relations issues, as they are able to assist you with the highest quality, industry specific support service.

MGA has been actively engaged in making submissions to the ACCC for the Grocery Pricing inquiry and to the Australian Fair Pay Commission in regard to the forthcoming wages review. We have also made a submission to National Weights and Measures, endorsing the move to a national weights and measures body while removing some of the red tape retailers are experiencing today. Additionally, MGA is making state-based submissions concerning Worker's Compensation.

In early March, MGA, in conjunction with the Grocery and Liquor Association (MGA's hard working Community Fundraising Committee), conducted its most successful Industry Golf Day in 30 years. A record number of retailers attended this day. Our research indicates that this is due to changing the Golf Day from a Monday to a Thursday. In total, 152 retailers, suppliers, brand representatives and wholesaler representatives from both the Grocery and Liquor Industries played golf. We had 120 people stay for the dinner and awards in the evening. In addition to their brilliant industry networking and fellowship, GALA were able to raise \$24,500 for the Reach Foundation youth projects in Victoria, NSW, Queensland, and soon in WA.



Master Grocers Australia CEO Jos de Bruin, Jim Stynes-Reach MGA President Rod Allen and MGA Trainer Roger Pallant enjoying the charity golf day.

Do independent supermarkets know their obligations when it comes to the environment? The exciting news is that MGA has developed a “**Keen to be Green**” knowledge base, addressing common questions, such as what is carbon, carbon trading, footprints, plastic bags and many more. It also includes an industry policy and a position statement. The next step for MGA is to engage with other stakeholders in our industry, so that we can establish a strong common national position that state and federal governments endorse and recognise.

As a concluding matter, I would like to encourage all independent supermarket owners to embrace technology, if you have not already done so. Communication is the essence of success for all businesses. The internet, websites, email, e-alerts and e-bulletins are the communication mediums now being used by all stakeholders in our industry. If you do not have an email address and are not using a computer to access all the above communications, then you being left behind.

The advantages of these methods of communication are numerous. To name just a few – all stakeholders communicate this way, it is the future, it reduces both paper waste and risk of losing or misplacing correspondence, it is quick and efficient and it is centralised.

I strongly encourage all independent supermarket owners to allocate some time each day to check their emails and e-correspondence – otherwise you don't know what you are missing!

Over the next months, MGA will be conducting seminars and training courses as well attending conferences and expos in most states – we hope to see you there!

Please keep your stories coming in!
Until Next Edition of the MGA Magazine – Good Trading!
Jos de Bruin