

The end of financial year is now behind us – now for the next exciting year of challenges and change ahead!

The MGA team have been very active in the past 8 weeks addressing a plethora of membership queries and concerns as well as writing submissions to state and federal governments on various important industry matters.

Recently you will have read about the possibility of “unit pricing” being introduced as a mechanism of encouraging more competitive grocery prices in the marketplace. Senator Fielding has introduced and presented a Private Members Bill to Federal Parliament supporting the introduction of Unit Pricing being made compulsory (law) in Australia. This Bill is now progressing and is undergoing a second reading. The QLD State Government is the first Australian state to introduce unit pricing for groceries despite retailers warning it could favour imported goods over local products. MGA does not support compulsory Unit Pricing as a mechanism to drive more competitive grocery prices. Unit Pricing should be the choice of retailers and could be introduced where a retailer believes there is a need, or where it fulfils consumer demand. Please see a more detailed article addressing this issue on Page 8.

MGA has taken a bold stand against the use of taxes or levies imposed upon consumers for plastic shopping bags obtained in independent supermarkets. MGA's

policy states that, as an industry, we are committed to introducing initiatives and customer education programs to help make customers become more aware of the need to significantly reduce their plastic shopping bag usage. The previous edition of this magazine had a number of suggested “Green Bag” education initiatives that may be adopted by stores. These initiatives include bold “Green” signage on front doors, on cash registers and on the inside of trolleys to remind and encourage customers to use “Green Bags”. Perhaps some retailers might consider giving away a Green Bag “free” with every \$30.00 purchase of groceries and setting up a “Green Bag Only” lane. We know there are many such ideas already in use



by independent supermarkets and we would very much like to hear all about them to share with our members. See the MGA website for more “Green Bag” information.

Liquor is fast becoming a very hot topic for our liquor licensed members, particularly in the area of underage drinking. The law is very clear about the penalties applicable if retailers are caught serving underage customers or if an adult (or parent) is caught purchasing on behalf of minors. Retailers are often challenged when needing to identify 18 year olds and the secondary sale of packaged liquor for minors. The Australian Liquor Store Association (of which MGA is a board member) have developed 2 wonderful initiatives to assist liquor retailers better manage both difficult situations as they arise. “ID – 25” and “Don't Buy It For Them” are wonderful initiatives that customers will understand and will enable retailers to communicate more succinctly when denying service to offenders. Please see inside this magazine for information regarding the Victorian launch – remember to visit our website for more information. Page 26



The MGA team has been working on a refreshed industry specific scanning code of practice. The intention is that the MGA will take full responsibility for all consumer and retailer scanning queries. This will take place when the MGA is in a position to officially launch this to the trade. We are currently consulting with various stakeholders to ensure its compatibility and rigor.

A submission has been made by MGA, on behalf of its members, to the Productivity Commission in regard to paid parental leave. Recently in the press you will note that Woolworths will be introducing 8 weeks paid parental leave. Whilst it is acknowledged that independent supermarket owners greatly value and wish to retain their staff, such an initiative could create a significant financial impost on many retailers. Ultimately increased costs will be reflected in higher prices to the consumer on supermarket shelves. This is something we do not want! The MGA supports paid parental leave if it is funded by the government or an independent supermarket owner chooses to implement such a benefit.

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