



Workplace Relations

The Workplace Relations team, led by Marie Brown has been very active with members this year, addressing many members needs from simple wage enquiries to dispute resolutions and unfair dismissals. MGA is registered with the Australian Industrial Relations Commission, thus allowing us to provide a representation service for our members should a need arise.

Other services include OH&S and workers compensation advice, policy making and difficult staff management strategies. There have been Workplace Relations seminars and forums in all states addressing important employer topics such as Know Your Award, Workers Compensation and Making a Workplace Agreements. Employers who have attended these events have greatly valued and benefited not only from this subsidised information support service, but also the networking opportunities with other retailers. Store owner committees have been formed in WA, NSW and Victoria to gather insights and ascertain their Workplace Agreement and Award needs. This knowledge will assist MGA with the development of agreements that provide workforce flexibility and efficiency without compromising the entitlements of employees.

The Workplace Relations Team is constantly on the look out for new opportunities to address members needs.

Compliance Training

The Training Team, lead by Michael Russell has made some significant in roads to growing MGA's current national compliance training offer this year. Attendances for 1 Day OH&S, Food Safety for Handlers and Supervisors and Responsible Service of Alcohol (Vic) courses are well up on last year. This attendance increase by retailers indicates that MGA's quality compliance training has become more relevant and valued in this age of rigorous regulations that must be adhered to by store owners and managers.

The MGA training team, including partners Sandy Bucello and the BLM team and Managing Director of Direct Recruitment, Jamie Croft, developed and launched a training packaged solution branded the "Ready 4 Work" program. This is an industry first designed to train people in the fundamentals of working in a supermarket. As the name suggests, "Ready 4 Work" aims to provide our members with a cost effective solution to recruiting new employees. This program is available to be completed online by any aspiring person wishing to work in our industry and is designed to complement and provide an entre into further in store training, such as induction and certificate training that may be offered at a later date.

MGA launched its very first on line training Product Knowledge Unit (PKU) prior to Christmas. This particular module was timely as it focused on providing delicatessen staff with concise product knowledge associated with Hams.

For the first time a Food Safety for Food Handlers and Supervisors training course was written and delivered in house, giving MGA direct contact with members.

Future Investment

The future looks very bright for MGA compliance training as we embark upon a new phase of independent supermarket training and support. The MGA Board after much rigor and due diligence has approved a significant Capex investment to fund the development of an intensely researched business support solution aptly named, the MGA's "Compliance Management System" (CMS). MGA Training Team will be recruiting additional compliance training expertise to bring this CMS to life. Testing of the CMS in selected stores is planned to commence in October 2008 with a full roll out to selected stores in March 2009. This system, which will incorporate a unique Certificate Four Retail Management qualification for a selected staff member is designed to take the worry and concern out of the management of a store owners day to day compliance obligations.

Further progress is underway, with much hard work behind the scenes, towards MGA becoming a National RTO (Registered Training Organisation). This will again enhance MGA's relevance and scope of operation to its members around the nation.

Government

Industry representation at State and Federal levels has fast become a Core Pillar of the MGA. There are many issues being addressed by politicians at State and Federal government level, affecting independent grocery and liquor supermarkets around Australia, that require MGA's constant attention. Our role is to provide support for our members to ensure their best business interests are being protected.

MGA manages its industry representation affairs in two forms.

Firstly, MGA has a federal voice by way of holding a directorship on 2 national industry boards, namely; National Association of Retail Grocers Australia (NARGA) and Australian Liquor Stores Association (ALSA).

Secondly, MGA is very active in its own right forwarding submissions on various state and federal issues at risk of affecting the businesses of independent supermarkets, our members.

Continued>