

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Annual General Meeting of Members Friday, 11 October 2013

It is with pleasure and confidence that I provide this Report on behalf of the VHIA Board for the 2012/13 year. The majority of this year unfolded under the Presidency of John Stanway who held the position for about a decade. Under John, the VHIA has strengthened its standing in the industry and in the eyes of all the key stakeholders. The financial position of VHIA is robust with another modest surplus being recorded. This has enabled the VHIA to finally acquire its own premises, premises that will meet its future needs more cost effectively. VHIA expects to relocate to its new premises in about April 2014. During the year, VHIA invested a substantial sum in a new enterprise wide database and communications system that enables a more rapid and responsive connectivity with all members. These enhanced capacities will be particularly telling in the next EBA rounds.

In developing future strategies and service imperatives, the Board has oriented VHIA more strongly towards core industrial services in the context of compelling and growing workforce challenges. This orientation will be more starkly evident over the next two years, particularly in the lead time before the next EBA bargaining rounds commence in 2015/16. This reorientation has also resulted in VHIA embarking on a program of divestment of its commercial interests in associated entities, such as Health Legal, Health Financial and Workplace Legal. These divestments should be finalized by the end of 2013.

The governance arrangements for VHIA are in good shape and are fully compliant with the requirements of the VHIA Rules and the Registered Organizations' requirements of the Fair Work Act. I have been pleased to be one of the new members who have recently joined the Board. We believe that the Board is well equipped to provide new perspectives and insights to ensure that the services are relevant, remain responsive and can provide leadership and drive for the emerging priorities. Additional impetus will be provided by an Industrial Strategy Subcommittee of the Board, which will generate the industrial priorities and ensure the appropriate strategic supports for these strategies.

The industrial team led by Alec Djoneff has been substantially strengthened with the recruitment of Simon Chant and Stuart McCullough in early 2013. This together with a strong collaborative relationship with Department of Health and Government has enabled the EBA results in 2013, particularly for agreements covering employed Doctors, to be the best outcomes achieved for members for many years and will enable employers to stabilize their medical employment costs for the next four years.

The VHIA will assume a strong workforce focused advocacy role regarding reform priorities which may be perceived at times as challenging, if not controversial. Gaining traction and momentum on reform initiatives is never easy or simple and should not be left to the EBA cycle. Such items cannot often be given appropriate priority during EBA bargaining. I, and the Board, look forward to working with AD and his team in the coming year to create opportunity and support for members' reform initiatives.

In closing I wish to record the strong appreciation of the Board for the contribution over many years of my predecessor John Stanway, who enabled the new Board to inherit a healthy, energetic organization that is looking forward to the next phase of its service evolution.

Dr Brendan Murphy
President
Victorian Hospitals' Industrial Association