

Committee Reports

Strategic Planning & Corporate Governance Committee



KATH ROBB
COMMITTEE CHAIR

Our key focus during 2009/2010 has been responsibility for development of an Association Strategic Plan. This has been achieved by the following process:

October 2009: Workshop with external facilitator for all members of Executive Council (the Annual Conference elected representative body of membership). This provided an opportunity to consider all areas of Association operations and ways forward.

Following discussions and input from council members, a resolution was passed for the Strategic Planning & Corporate Governance Committee to develop key elements of the Plan, to be presented to the Executive Council meeting in March 2010.

March 2010: Strategic Plan as presented was approved by Executive Council.

STRATEGIC PLAN

Vision: To be the principal membership based advocacy organisation serving the business of farming in NSW.

Mission: To improve the business environment, efficiency and sustainability of our Members and their Association.

Values: Professionalism, integrity, democracy and continual recognition of the value of Members.

Core Business: Representing Members Interests.

Key Priority Areas: Policy – Membership – Industrial – Marketing – Commercial.

In the development of the Plan, it was recognised that all stated objectives should be 'SMART' 'Specific, measurable, attainable realistic, timely policy.'

The **Strategic Plan** cannot function without an accompanying **Operational Plan**. The Operational Plan is developed by the CEO, approved by the Board, and provides the way forward for the Strategic Plan. The Plan will be subject to periodic review.

Rural Affairs

The past year has been a busy year for the Rural Affairs Committee.

A large amount of activity has been in reviews of areas that had their EC status expire in early 2010. All of these areas except Hume were continued for 12 months. A request for a review of the Hume area was submitted however it was not granted by the Federal Government.

The Committee has also been active in the EC applications of Bega, Dunedoo/Mudgee, Bundarra, and Eurobodalla. The Bega area was successful, the Dunedoo area was not successful and at the time of writing the Committee were still awaiting an announcement on the other applications.

The release of the pilot for drought reform has enabled us to review the proposed measures and we continue

to advocate for alternative drought support measures to support and broaden the proposed preparedness measures.

By educating the students of today we are creating an understanding and affiliation among the decision makers of tomorrow.

The Committee has developed an education strategy to pursue the implementation of Association's sustainable food and fibre. We will be working with a range of stakeholders to ensure agriculture is embedded into the teaching of primary and secondary students and that the appropriate resources are made available.

By educating the students of today we are creating an understanding and affiliation among the decision makers of tomorrow.

We are working on a range of bushfire issues, particularly the roll out of the Bush Fire

Risk Management Plans, better communication with landholders, and establishing a register of the farmer representatives on the Bush Fire Management Committees.

We are monitoring the development of the National Broadband Network representing Members interests through ACCAN.

We are working with the PACWG to put forward rural crime concerns, and we will closely watch the roll out of the National Health reforms. We look forward to representing the Membership's interests in 2010/11.

SARAH THOMPSON
COMMITTEE CHAIR



Livestock Health and Pest Authority Taskforce

The Taskforce was established by the President at the 2009 Annual Conference to consider the motions submitted to Conference regarding the Livestock Health and Pest Authorities (LHPA) and provide a recommended resolution to the October Executive Council meeting.

In addition the Taskforce was asked to consider the delivery of a more equitable rating system including minimum holding size for rating purposes, carrying capacity and pest insect levy; a cap on further growth of State Councils growing bureaucracy; transparency and accountability; representation of rate payers; and Travelling Stock Reserve ownership.

The Taskforce met via

teleconference on four occasions to work through the terms of reference. Taskforce discussion focused on the LHPA rates. This included discussion on the move to an area based rate, the use of notional carrying capacity, the levying of rate payers under 10 hectares, and the breakup of rates. A discussion paper outlining the background to various motion issues was developed to allow the Taskforce to consider the options under each motion. Following deliberation a Taskforce position was developed.

The Taskforce submitted a recommendation to Executive Council which was subsequently passed as Association policy.

Following the Executive Council meeting in October



JOHN RIDLEY
TASKFORCE CHAIR

the Association has forwarded the LHPA policy on to the LHPA State Management Council. The Association was active during the debate on the *Rural Lands Protection Board Amendment Act 2009* that delayed the introduction of a move to an area based system of rate calculation away from the current notional carrying capacity calculation. Total LHPA rate collection for 2010 was restrained to CPI and the pest insect levy was maintained at the 2009 rate. The Association has also held discussions with the LHPA State Management Council regarding the review of the Travelling Stock Reserves.

Western Division

It is pleasing for me as Chair of Western Division Advisory Council to compare the contrast in seasons since my last chairs report when I talk of dust storms and drought, to what we have before us now.

Western Division has experienced extremely heavy rains in the North, which is gradually reaching the South, contributing to an abundance of feed not seen in a decade or more.

Unfortunately, with good seasons there is a down-side, with many Members now experiencing flooding, damaged roads, fences and now we are dealing with plague-locusts and blow-flies.

Council was recently engaged in a review of the Western Lands Regulations 2004.

The Council recognises that there is no better time than now to contribute to the development of a comprehensive policy on drought preparedness as an alternative to Exceptional Circumstances. With this in mind the Council has prepared a paper for inclusion to the Association's Alternative Drought Measures.

Western Division has recently

experienced some rapid change with the announcement of the Western Lands Commissioner Mr Geoff Woods retirement, the rebranding of the Department of Lands to the Land and Property Management Authority, which now include three regions as opposed to the previous six, being the North Coast, the South Coast and Western Inland.

The Council was recently engaged in a review of the Western Lands Regulations 2004. After consultation with Land and Property Management Authority's Deputy Commissioner and further consideration by the Council it was recommended that no change to the Regulations be adopted.

The Council would also like to welcome the appointment of Michelle Kelly, Regional Membership Co-ordinator to the region. Michelle's interaction with Members will be a welcome conduit in bringing their concerns to the attention of the Council. Through her endeavours it is hoped that there will be a renewed interest amongst the Membership.

Industrial Association

A busy year with numerous pieces of legislation commencing including the general implementation of the *Fair Work Act 2009*, its regulations, award modernisation and the associated lobbying efforts.

Horticulture Award 2010

The Association submits applications to the Australian Industrial Relations Commission with the NFF in relation to the Horticulture Award 2010, seeking to secure unchanged genuine piecework provisions and flexibility in the span of ordinary hours that reflects the perishable nature of produce in the industry that is the subject of the award. The application sought piecework provisions that would enable the average competent picker to receive set piece rate as agreed between Employer and Employee as opposed to all

pieceworkers no matter how much produce was picked. The application also sought flexible span of ordinary hours. The Association was successful in these endeavours.

Awards at a Glance
To assist Members with the detail of modern awards, the Industrial Association released award summaries to all Members known as 'Award @ a Glance'. We received great feedback from Members for this development.

Seminars

The Industrial Association carried out two types of

Seminars in the past year – *Fair Work* and *Horticulture* which took the changes in Industrial Relations in the past year to the regions so that Members could have direct contact with the IR team and could ask a range of questions in regard to the seminars and other general questions as required.

OHS Harmonisation & Graeme Kirk Holdings High Court win

The Association was successful in securing a landmark High Court win in relation to the conduct of OHS prosecutions. The High Court condemned the operation of the current

system and found that Inspectors, in bringing prosecutions must particularise the risk that is subject of the action rather than simply state that an Employer failed generally to provide a safe system of work.

The Industrial Association can now look forward to a timetable with respect to the national OHS legislation's implementation. By 1 January 2012 the Federal government has stated that it will have a Bill before parliament in regard to having a federal legislative framework in place as soon as possible after this date.

GRAHAM MORPHETT
COMMITTEE CHAIR

