

**Welcome to the DECEMBER, 2019 Newsletter**

I was re-reading the June newsletter, specifically, the opening paragraph and little, regarding the economy, has changed. There are still very high levels of household debt, low wage growth, continued cost increases and a general lack of confidence – both for businesses and consumers. Broadly, it's tough! Not impossible, but tough.

**AGM**

Our AGM in August was a successful function and everyone who attended seemed to enjoy themselves. The location, at the Sofitel Gold Coast, Broadbeach, provides us with what we require and the agenda seems to work. I can advise that the **2020 AGM** will be held over the weekend of **21st-23rd August** at the same hotel but the agenda will change slightly. We anticipate continuing with another couple of speakers. Please mark the dates in your diary.

**MEMBERSHIP**

ABECS membership has continued to increase. Currently, we have 49 members and this will grow to 50 by the end of March, 2020.

I should reiterate that contacts for potential members given to us by current (or, in one case, a former) members is the most successful method of increasing our membership. We're more than happy to follow these up.

**WEBSITE**

We have continued to use this medium as our main means of providing all members with news, prices and other information. The most recent posting concerned the 'sugar pledge' made by the ABCL and the major soft drink makers and the progress to date. We'll add more information if we think it to be relevant.

The minutes of the June and August Board meetings have been approved and posted on the website.

**ABECS BOARD**

At this year's AGM, Malcolm Lack retired as a Director following six years of service. His position on the Board has been filled by Nasir Chowdhury (Buderim Group) who was the only nominee. Glenn Stephens also retired but offered himself for re-election, which occurred.

In past years there was some thought that the Board had become a bit of an 'old boys club'; however, that's no longer the case and, in fact, most of the current Directors are relatively new. In the coming months, we will post photos and a brief biography of each Director to our website so you'll know who they are.

**SUPPLY AGREEMENTS**

Renewed agreements are now in place with: Plasdene Glass-Pak, for supply of glass bottles; Sopura, for supply of cleaning chemicals; VIP Closures, for supply of plastic caps; and Visy Board and Orora for supply of corrugated cartons. For those of you who attended this year's AGM, you will remember that one of our members, Angus Wilson (Big Springs Water), has commenced production of PET HOD bottles and, soon, we will establish an agreement with him to supply these large bottle to other members. More details will be provided early in 2020.

**ONGOING ACTIVITIES**

In 2020, we'll review opportunities for a group freight arrangement. (This, in the past, has been difficult because of our geographic spread but we'll give it another try.) In addition to our involvement with group supply arrangements, Daniel, during the past six months, has attended AGMs for Co-ops NSW and ABCL, as well as Fine Foods and Australian Waste and Recycling Expos.

**On behalf of the Management Team (Dimity, Daniel and Peter) I wish you and your families all the best for the Festive Season. I hope you'll be able to wind down and enjoy Christmas for, at least, a few days. We can only wish for a healthier economy and increased business in the New Year.**