

REIA NEWS

ISSUE NINETEEN: DECEMBER 2012

A CHANGING OF THE GUARD:
THE NEW REIA PRESIDENT AT THE HELM



ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

REIA FIGHTS AGAINST RED TAPE

REIA DECEMBER BOARD DINNER

NAR 2012

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NEW REIA PRESIDENT

Mr Peter Bushby
REIA President



WELCOME FROM NEW REIA PRESIDENT

Tasmanian Peter Bushby has been elected as the new President of the Real Estate Institute of Australia (REIA).

Peter's origins in real estate date back to the early 1970's when as a 17 year old he started as a cadet with the family real estate business, Bushby & Co. Originally planning to do law, what was a Christmas holiday job turned out to be the start of a career in real estate during the Whitlam era.

Fourth generation in the business with direct lineage back to 1914 following in his father, grandfather and great grandfather's footsteps as Estate Agents in Launceston, the tradition continues as both of Peter's daughters also hold salesperson registrations in his business.

Peter was a partner in Bushby First National before opening his own boutique agency specialising in residential property sales in 1997. He joined the State Board at that time, was elected as President of

the REIT in 2007 serving three years in that role and in 2010 joined REIA Board as the Tasmanian delegate.

"I am humbled to have been elected as the President—it is something I had never aspired to but a role I am honoured to have been entrusted with," said Mr Bushby.

"I have the utmost respect for the work that all the real estate institutes around the country do on our behalf as members and it is not until you get closely involved that this becomes truly evident."

"They are committed to the benefit of the members and REIA exists to provide the representation required at the national level. REIA deals with a raft of issues that need to be addressed on behalf of its stakeholders—the state and territory

» *article continues*

NEW REIA PRESIDENT

COVER STORY

» *continued*

institutes—for their members in turn. Individually they cannot achieve the same outcomes.”

Mr Bushby, who has lived with multiple sclerosis for the past 33 years, takes over from Ms Pamela Bennett, who held the role for the past 18 months. Morgan Shearer from the Northern Territory continues in his role as REIA’s Vice President.

“I congratulate Pam, who so ably led REIA for the past 18 months—a period of change for the organisation with many challenges. We are indebted to her for the outcomes achieved in that time,” said Mr Bushby.

“We now must look to the future. There is no doubt that the past few years have seen many challenges and that many more will confront us but I do believe that we will achieve more if we stay united and focus collectively and in a cohesive manner.”

“My view is that for REIA to be completely effective in delivering the outcomes that are required for its members it must be adequately and appropriately funded. I am amazed at the output of the small but very effective team we have in place at REIA.”

Mr Bushby believes REIA can and should grow in terms of membership and with that associated income stream, ensure the on-going capacity to deliver higher levels of services.

“In the political arena we are making progress in our aggressive campaign against the dumbing down of licensing standards across the country. I would expect that we can make some strong commitments and gains as we face a Federal election, particularly in the area of property taxation reform.”

“I take my hat off to those who do serve on their local branch, their state or territory board and REIA

Board—this work in almost every instance is done voluntarily for the benefit of our profession.”

“I am proud to be the sixth Tasmanian to be REIA President—the REIT has from the early days been a strong voice and actively played its part in the evolution and longevity of REIA which in 2014, will celebrate 90 years in existence.”

“I wish you and your families the very best for this Christmas season and may 2013 be a prosperous year for all.”

Mr Peter Bushby

REIA PRESIDENT



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Image: Australian Capital Tourism



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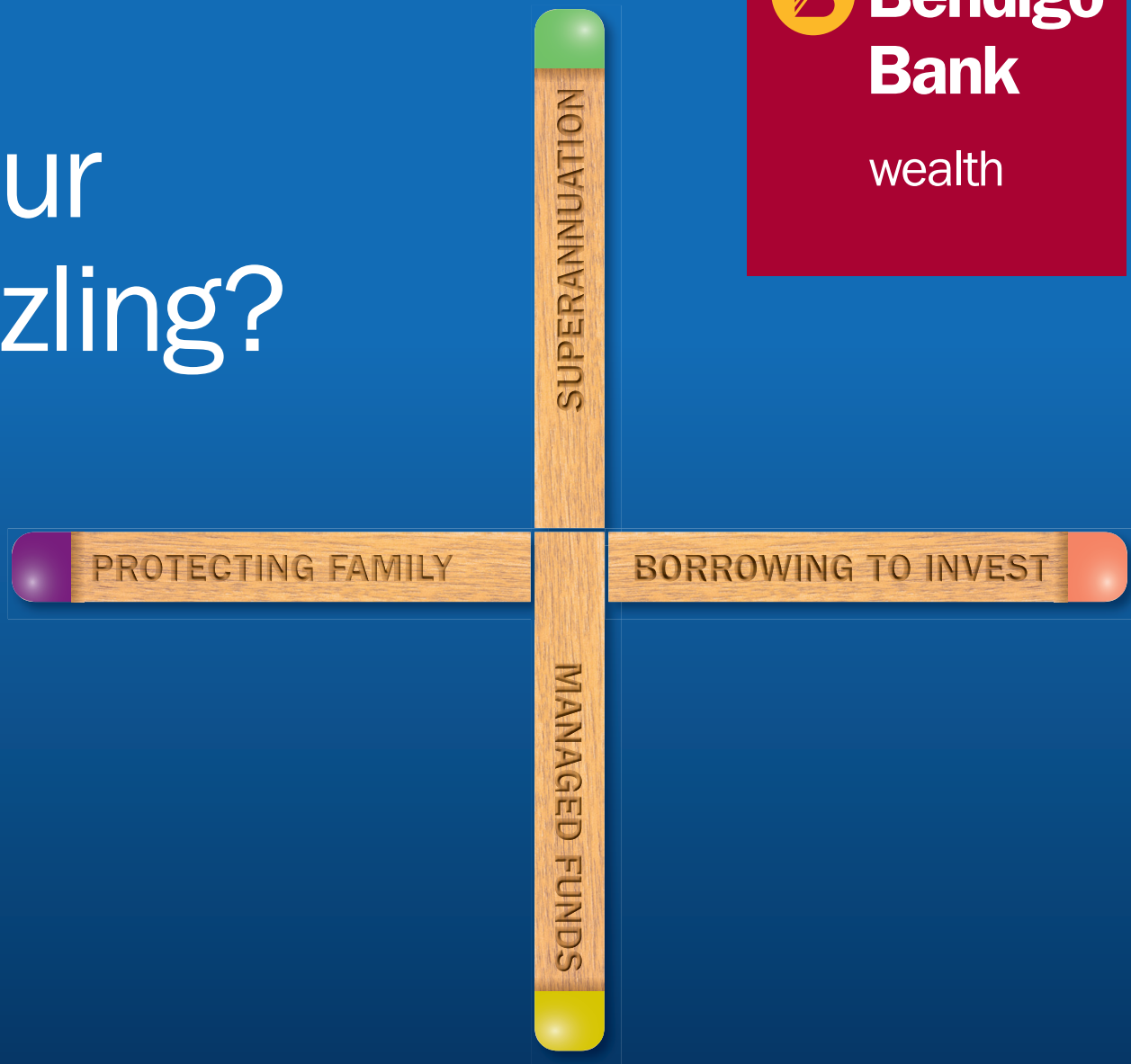


Image: Australian Capital Tourism

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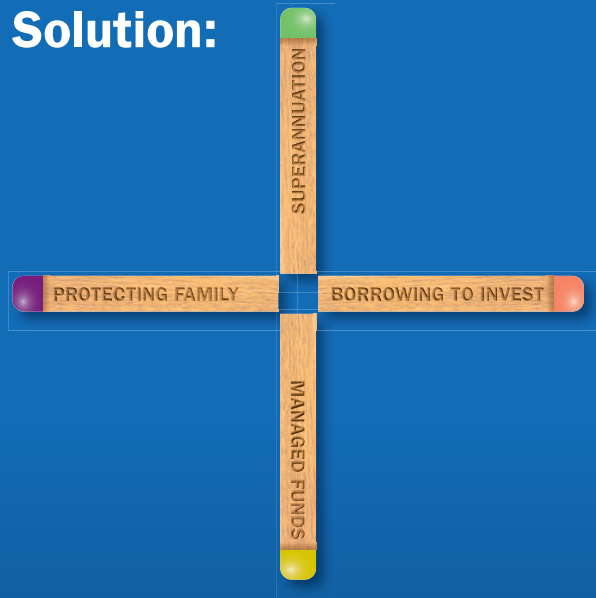
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FIABCI PRESIDENT'S REPORT



FIABCI Australia's Chris McGregor and
FIABCI World President Judy Shenefield



Chris McGregor

I have just returned from the Thon Hotel Bristol Stephanie in Brussels following my first winter business meetings and it was a great learning experience, with 28 Countries involved, 160 delegates and 20 accompanying delegates.

Our past Australian President Robyn Waters was also in Brussels representing Australia. Robyn has been appointed President of the membership committee with Marnie Ralph from Tasmania Vice President. It is terrific to see two Australians involved on the International committees.

Yeow Thit Sang, the Appointed President of the Prix d'Excellence Committee, and I spoke and he is keen to hear from those who have identified a suitable development, hotel or new commercial site etc that would be worthy of being nominated for this prestigious award. Please contact Yeow on yeowthitsang@gmail.com or me on chris@mcgregorfn.com if you believe you know of a property that would be suitable for nomination.

The 64th FIABCI World Congress is going to be held in Taichung Taiwan in May 27-29 in 2013. They have secured almost a million dollars in sponsorship which will be put back into the Congress to assist keeping the cost down and I have been assured that is going to be an amazing event. So diarise now. www.fiabci64.tw

I also had the honour of nominating Robyn Waters in Brussels on behalf of the Australian Chapter for President Elect for 2014-15. We believe that she will do an outstanding job and she has our full support.

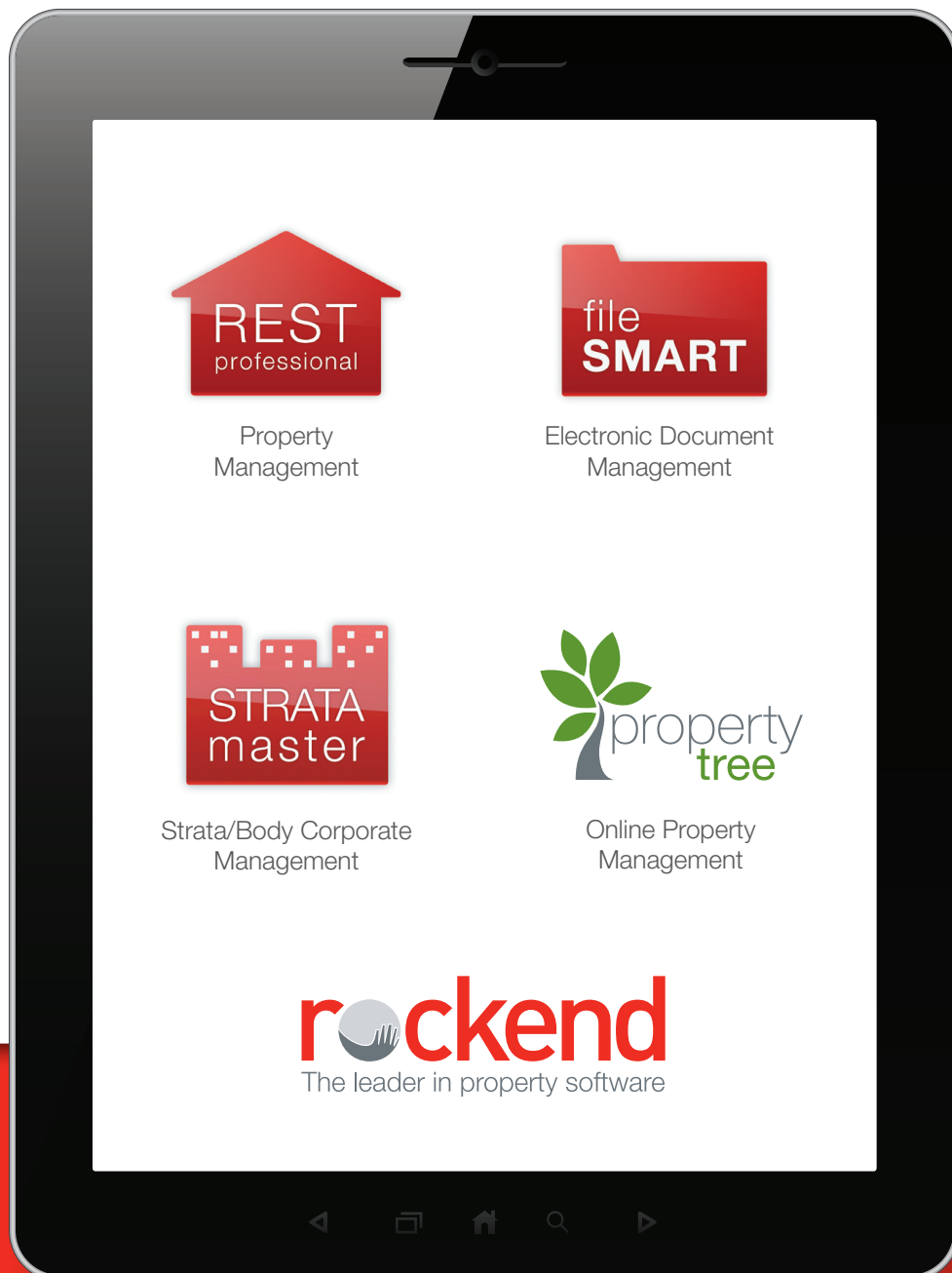
Don't forget to renew your membership soon so you don't miss out on getting your contact details in the 2013 International Directory. It is only \$260 to be a member of the International Real Estate Federation. Contact REIA on 02 6282 4277 for more information.

On behalf of our Australian Chapter, I wish you all very merry Christmas and a prosperous 2013.

Chris McGregor

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This article is brought to you by REIA
Chief Executive Officer, Amanda Lynch



REIA FIGHTS AGAINST RED TAPE AND 'DUMBING DOWN' OF EDUCATION STANDARDS FOR REAL ESTATE



REIA CEO Amanda Lynch and
Prime Minister Julia Gillard



COSBOA CEO Peter Strong and
REIA CEO Amanda Lynch

The COAG Business Advisory Forum on December 6 was attended by REIA CEO Amanda Lynch and hosted by Prime Minister Julia Gillard and Finance Minister Senator Penny Wong

Only four industry groups were invited to participate in the Forum and Ms Lynch, who is also chair of the Council of Small Business of Australia (COSBOA), and executive director Peter Strong, represented the small business sector.

Ms Lynch welcomed the announcement that the Productivity Commission will undertake a national study on regulator engagement with small business.

"The real estate sector is case in point of how tough government agencies are with small business, particularly from a compliance and enforcement perspective," Ms Lynch said. "Not only are we unpaid tax collectors, with superannuation, GST and paid parental leave, but we are also unpaid policemen and women. Real estate agents have to ensure compliance with all sorts of regulation and this is growing."

REIA is working with the Red Tape Challenge to identify examples of red tape that need to be removed.

The preamble to the terms of reference to the Productivity Commission study

has a handle on the problem, stating that: "Small business stakeholders consistently raise with Governments their view that compliance approaches and the regulatory posture adopted by regulators with respect to small business, and the degree to which regulators recognise and accommodate the particular circumstances of small business, can have a significant impact on regulatory burden."

Ms Lynch said the Communique of the COAG meeting on 7 December "welcomed progress on the legislative framework to establish a National Occupational Licensing Scheme. The NOLS Taskforce is working toward a Final Decision RIS and legislation, drawing on stakeholder feedback, for consideration in the first half of 2013. This is an important reform to improve workforce mobility in our economy and careful consideration is needed to ensure it delivers maximum benefits to the community, including best-practice regulatory reform". The insertion of "best practice" is the result of REIA's advocacy and input to the Communique. The REIA Board has vowed to keep up the fight against the dilution of standards on behalf of Australia's 80,000 real estate agents until common sense prevails.

A NIGHT TO REMEMBER: POLITICS AND PRALINES FOR THE REIA BOARD

The Shadow Minister for Small Business, Competition Policy and Consumer Affairs, the Hon. Bruce Billson addressed the REIA Board at our December dinner in Canberra hosted by new President Peter Bushby.

Mr Billson's presentation follows the address to the Board in June by the Minister for Small Business, Housing and Homelessness, the Hon. Brendan O'Connor.

At the dinner, REIA was delighted to welcome representatives of the Professionals Group—our newest member of the REIA Affiliates' Council.

Mr Billson paid tribute to former REIA President Pamela Bennett, describing her style, intelligence and grace under pressure as "Audrey Hepburnesque" and Deputy President Morgan Shearer in turn thanked Mr Billson for his sincerity and support for the small business sector.

In his presentation, Mr Billson described the challenges facing small business and the real estate sector, with dented consumer confidence affecting small business—a sector employing 4.7 million Australians.



L-R Bruce Billson, Neville Sanders and Amanda Lynch

L-R Peter Bushby and Bruce Billson

He mentioned national licensing and defended the need to preserve standards and training for real estate agents, which is under threat by the COAG Taskforce's proposals. Mr Billson spoke about the Coalition's small business policies and its focus on red tape reduction. He committed to ensuring that superannuation and paid parental leave were collected by the Tax Office, to remove the burden from small business owners—many of whom spent Sunday afternoons doing their paperwork instead of spending time with their families.

Also at the REIA Board dinner, journalist Steve Lewis provided insights into Canberra's political scene and the Board went away with copies of his political thriller co-written with 7.30 Report presenter Chris Uhlmann—*The Marmalade Files*.

This article is brought to you by
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NATIONAL LICENSING AND REAL ESTATE AGENTS

Over the last few editions of REIA News, aspects of the proposed changes in licensing for the real estate profession under reforms proposed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) have been examined.

This article covers the proposal for a real estate agent as outlined in the Consultation Regulation Impact Statement (RIS) and REIA's response. The full response to the RIS is available at www.reia.com.au.

The RIS proposes that real estate agents should require a Certificate IV qualification of 24 units of study. This compares to the current arrangements where: Western Australia, South Australia, Tasmania and the Northern Territory have a Diploma level qualification of 26 units; Victoria and New South Wales have a Certificate IV qualification of 24 units; Queensland requires 19 units and the Australian Capital Territory requires 18 units. When one considers that currently

there is a requirement for ongoing professional development in New South Wales, Western Australia, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory and that this requirement would be abolished under the RIS proposal, the proposal amounts to a substantial lowering of educational requirements for real estate agents.

REIA, in its response to the RIS, has recommended that real estate agents should be licensed after the completion of 26 units from the *CPP50307 Diploma of Property Services (Agency Management)*¹. This amounts to eight units on top of the REIA recommendation for an agent's representative.

¹ The units are: Work in the Real Estate Industry; Identify Legal and Ethical Requirements of Property Sales; Identify Legal and Ethical Requirements of Property Management; Interpret Legislation to Complete Agency Work; Minimise Consumer & Agency Risk; Establish and manage agency trust accounts; Coordinate Risk Management in the Property Industry; Manage Operation Plan; Manage Budgets and Financial Plans; Recruit, Select and Induct Staff; Manage People Performance; Market the Agency; Develop a strategic business plan in the real estate industry; Establish and Build Client Agency Relationships; Lease Property; Working the Business Broking Industry; Appraise Property; List Property for Sale; List Property for Lease; Market Property for Lease; Market Property for Sale; Monitor and Manage Lease or Tenancy Agreement; Present at Tribunals; Prepare and Present Property Reports; Sell and Finalise the Sale of Property by Private Treaty, and; Prepare for Auctions and Complete Sale.

The Diploma requirements support the skill set needed by a licensed real estate agent. Rather than being regarded as a trade performing repetitive work, real estate agents are professionals that must apply both: technical expertise in relation to the delivery of professional services utilising the skills of negotiation, communication and analysis of the property market; and the theoretical knowledge of the legislative requirements for each type transaction in the sale, lease and rental of residential, rural, commercial, retail and industrial property to achieve an outcome that provides maximum return to clients and minimum risk to consumers and to ensure that all staff

within the agency are performing to the same standard of professionalism.

Given that real estate agents are dealing with the largest investment of the typical person's life, the skills provided in the Diploma course provide a public benefit to the Australian community. The Diploma level also reflects the qualification level of other occupation groups entrusted with individuals' life savings such as financial planners.

Real estate agents have a responsibility to exercise high levels of knowledge, expertise and professionalism in their conduct, particularly, but not only, when performing the role of agency principal (or 'nominee').

The failure of real estate agents to acquire these essential skills and knowledge through lack of mandatory licensing training has the potential for serious financial ramifications for consumers in these transactions.

The Government's response is expected next year and REIA News will keep our members informed of all developments.



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INDUSTRY ARTICLE

By Carolyn Majda, Manager,
Terri Scheer Insurance

ENSURE SPARKS DON'T FLY THIS CHRISTMAS

The festive season and fire hazards often come hand-in-hand.

Christmas lights, candles, sparklers, fireworks, heatwaves, baking and barbequing can all present fire risks within the home.

You might like to send your landlords and tenants a card or letter wishing them a happy Christmas, and include tips on how to protect themselves and their properties from fire.

This could help to ensure that an insurable event doesn't extinguish their festive cheer.

TIPS FOR LANDLORDS

Fire alarms should be fitted on every level of a property and outside every bedroom door. It's important to check that all fire alarms are in good working order by changing the batteries and cleaning dust from the device on a yearly basis.

Attending to fire alarms before Christmas may act as a reminder for the landlord to complete the task every year. Alarms that are more than 10 years old should be replaced.

Encourage landlords to fit their properties with fire extinguishers. These should be positioned in areas where they can be easily accessed, such as the kitchen and laundry, and be accompanied by instructions for use.

If a property has a barbeque area surrounded by foliage, you could also recommend to the landlord to have it cut back to reduce the risk of it catching alight from a wayward spark.

TIPS FOR TENANTS

Real Christmas trees contain a lot of natural oils that are very flammable. Suggest to tenants that they position their trees as far away from heat sources as possible and safely secure them in an upright position so they

are unable to be knocked over onto hazards such as power boards. Encourage them to keep trees watered to prevent them drying out, and although uncommon in Australia, it may be worth reminding tenants not to use candles as tree decorations.

Tenants may also benefit from reminders to unplug Christmas lights before going to bed, not to plug more than three strands of lights onto one extension cord, not to run electrical wires under rugs, and to keep strands of lights away from children and pets. If your tenants are going away for an extended period of time, suggest that they unplug all electrical appliances before they leave.

As candles are popular at Christmas time, remind tenants that it can be dangerous to leave them unattended and to position them on windowsills and mantles. Candle wicks shouldn't be longer than a ¼ of an inch in height, and should be placed in sturdy holsters that will not tip over.

» *article continues*

Most fires caused by barbeques occur when they are first used after being stored during winter. It's therefore important for tenants to clean barbeques thoroughly and check that there is nothing blocking the tubes that lead to the burner. Checking gas bottles for leaks is also essential.

If you manage any properties that are situated in rural areas, you could remind tenants of local fire bans and recommend that they don't use sparklers and fireworks or start bonfires.

For further information, visit www.terrischeer.com.au or call 1800 804 016.

Media contact: Corporate Conversation, 08 8224 3535

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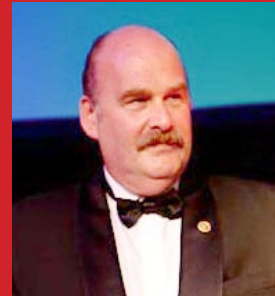
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NAR 2012

Quentin Kilian

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
REAL ESTATE INSTITUTE
NORTHERN TERRITORY (REINT)



For one week in each year there is a unique (some might say strange) migration that takes place. It's a migration that brings together an exotic group from around the globe—in fact it brings together around 20,000 of this amazing creature known to most as *The Realtor*. The event is the National Association of Realtors (NAR) Annual Conference and Exhibition, this year held in Orlando, Florida.

As a first-time attendee of this event, let me start by stating the obvious—WOW! This was no small get together. The final numbers saw almost 20,000 realtors and real estate professionals from around the US and global markets. Over 1,700 international attendees and of those, 41 were from Australia.

With the associated activities, including social events and the Expo, the 2012 NAR Conference stretched over a week. Every day during the conference, delegates had a choice of around two dozen different breakout sessions to attend. Add to that the largest real estate Expo I've ever seen, which ran over two and half days, and you have an event that really did deliver something of interest to everyone.

The conference, for the international delegation, started with a rather

grand 'International Realtors Welcome Reception', held in the Grand Ballroom of the Rosen Inn. This was a great opportunity to start the networking.

My personal 'big moment' came as part of the General Session. The General Session is essentially the grand opening of the conference. Over 7000 real estate professionals gathered in the main hall at the Orange County Convention Centre in Orlando where they were addressed by the NAR President and then, along with 47 other international representatives I strode proudly onto the stage bearing and waving the Australian flag. I thought I'd also play this up a bit so I wore an RM Williams Stockman's oilskin coat and an Akubra hat.

The networking, learning and sharing of information was invaluable. Having the opportunity to meet and talk with such a diverse group, not only from different parts of the world, but from across the US, was a great opportunity.

Overall, the US market has seen a pickup of some 5.2% in October, and that puts it up 13.2% from the

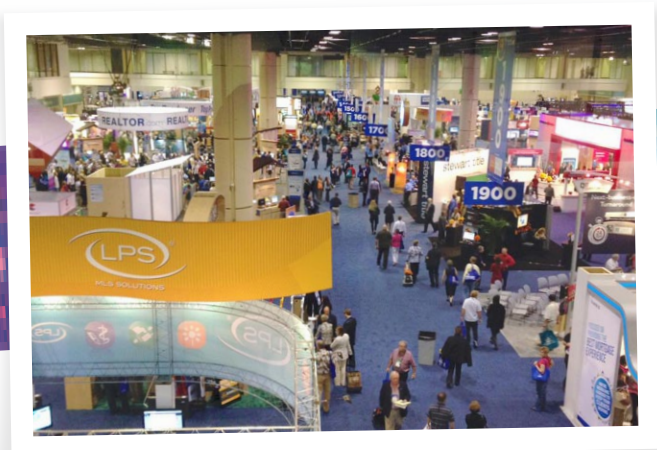


REINT's Quentin Kilian flying the Aussie flag at NAR

same time in 2011. The rises in the market over the past year or so have been subtle but the US market has seen pending sales (signed contracts) rise for 18 consecutive months.

Foreclosures still loom large in the US and the amount of stock that has been handed back to banks and mortgage lenders is phenomenal. However, that also presents opportunity for investors. I met with a number of people who are picking up foreclosed stock, refurbishing them, selling them on to investors and then doing the property management for them. In one case a man in Florida

» *article continues*



One of many exhibitions at NAR

is encouraging the 'former owners' to stay on as renters and when their fortunes pick up, to consider making an offer to the investor to purchase back their property. These properties can range as low as the mid \$40,000 to \$80,000 plus, depending on location.

The Expo exposed a range of new technologies—much of it US-centric in its design but even then it gave one ideas for similar development for the Australian market place. One new product just recently launched is called RPR—Realtors Property Resource. It's pretty much like a US version of

Propertydata.com.au from Realestateview.com.au, but it carries data on 150 million properties across the USA.

And the final night concert—a private concert for around 5000 realtors—featured a two hour concert by Glenn Frey and Joe Walsh of the Eagles. Again ... WOW!

The 2013 NAR Conference will be held in San Francisco. Details are being published soon on the NAR website for dates, sessions and costs. It will be held in early November and I would sincerely urge you, if you have the time and you



At NAR in Washington DC, Pam Bennett with Ken Trepeta, David Magee, Gary Weaver, and Jamie Gregory.

really want to expand you knowledge and contact list, get on a plane and get yourself over to this event. The one thing I can absolutely promise you is that it will be like no other real estate gathering you have ever seen before.

This article is brought to you by REIA
Chief Executive Officer, Amanda Lynch



MENZIES RESEARCH CENTRE

The CEO of the Real Estate Institute of Australia, Amanda Lynch, delivered a presentation at the Menzies Research Centre's Small Business Policy Roundtable on 15 November 2012.

Ms Lynch, who is the Chair of the Council of Small Business of Australia (COSBOA), addressed the topic of A Fairer Go for Small Business in a Competitive Environment.

She spoke about national licensing, the flawed process and outcomes and the importance of genuine and early industry 'buy in' to Government decision-making, the state of the national real estate market and the two scenarios presented in the 2012 SQM Research report—one focusing on a stable economy with property prices increasing in 2013 between 4-7%. The other scenario is a break-up of the Eurozone, terms of trade crashing, banks rationing credit and the RBA forced to cut rates by 150 basis points—which forecasts

a 3% fall. This shows how variable the market is with buyer confidence linked to international events and the resilience of the Australian economy.

"Like the housing market, Australia's 2.7 million small businesses have faced challenging times in the post GFC environment. This is the largest group of employers in Australia," Ms Lynch said.

For those that succeed—many of them are nimble, entrepreneurial and plugged into Asia. In 2010-11, small businesses made up 41.6% of all goods exporters by number. In June 2011, there were 17,774 small business exporters nationally. Based on the total value of exports, the top five destination export countries for Australia are: China; Japan; Republic of Korea; India and the United States of America. These include services, products, intellectual capital and consultancy eg. accounting, medical, graphic design, superannuation consultancy, computer programs, advice on setting up franchises, and electronics.

Ms Lynch said that tax reform for small business is urgently needed and any tax advantages provided to incorporated



REIA CEO Amanda Lynch

» *article continues*

small businesses should also apply to sole traders, partnerships and trusts. The tax rate should be reduced to 29% to assist small business with the staged superannuation increases from 9-12%. Access to finance is also a major issue for small business and it is getting more difficult in the post-GFC environment to borrow for growth. Small businesses feel the effects much faster than larger companies with reserves to match as cash flow becomes more strained.

An increasing trend is the feminisation of small business. Women comprise one third of small business owners and operators in Australia. This represents a significant contribution to the Australian economy, as ninety five per cent of all businesses are small businesses, employing around 4 and a half million people. Australian women are starting small businesses at twice the rate of men. Research by BankWest using Bureau of Statistics data revealed strong growth in the rate of women starting up businesses over the past five years (7 per cent) compared with men (1.9 per cent).

Ms Lynch nominated red tape reduction and compliance as the number one issue facing small business and COSBOA has welcomed progress made by the Federal Government with its Standard Business Reporting

framework and the Opposition's announcement that under a Coalition Government superannuation will be collected by the Tax Office. "After working six days a week, real estate agents spend their little spare time doing paperwork on behalf of the Government as unpaid tax collectors. REIA welcomes any initiatives that alleviate this unfair burden," she said.

Record keeping variances also needed to be looked at by the Government. "We are drowning in a sea of paper. It is crazy that tax records need to be kept for five years but private Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) are told they have to keep filing cabinets full of training records for 25 years. It is good to see the ACT Government has reduced rental bond forms to two pages instead of four—that is a start but much more needs to be done."

Ms Lynch said it was imperative that small business has 'buy-in' to national reform initiatives. "When government has pre-ordained conclusions this is to the detriment of small business, for example, national licensing. Whilst we are aware of the initiative to require a Regulation Impact Statement (RIS), including a cost-benefit analysis, for new Commonwealth Government regulatory requirements prior to

implementation, the application of this requirement has at best been variable and at worst inadequate. The cost-benefit analyses have been superficial and have failed to measure the cost impact of new regulation on small business. Therefore, notwithstanding any rules the Commonwealth has about when a regulatory impact statement should be written, any new law should have a business impact statement estimating the cost that the law will impose on industry."

She said a methodology for periodic measurement of success in reducing regulatory burden on small business should be developed. "One approach would be to sample a representative number of small businesses across a range of sectors and develop a baseline measurement of the regulatory burden of all government (local, state and Commonwealth) reporting requirements and then to again measure this at periodic intervals to see how much the regulatory burden has grown. Another approach would be to identify a "hit list" of most time consuming/costly regulatory functions for small business, and then develop ways to reduce the burden imposed."



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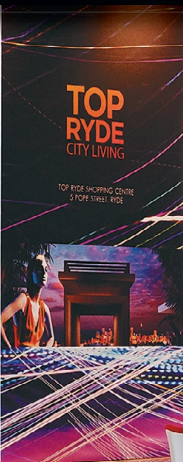
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AON

INDUSTRY UPDATE

Industry news from around Australia



Home is where the school is

With the start of 2013 fast approaching, families with ambitions to send their children to some of Sydney's most popular schools are going to greater lengths to secure a home to meet strict enrolment qualification criteria.

"Evidence from the Raine & Horne property network shows more parents are adding 'proximity to a good school' to their wish list of home features," says Angus Raine, CEO of Raine & Horne.

It seems that since the introduction of the 'My School' website a few years ago, it is now easier for parents to compare the performance and progress of almost 10,000 schools in Australia and as a result, properties located within the catchment areas of schools scoring high academic rankings are in demand.

"Good family homes in selective school catchment areas don't usually come up for sale all that often in Parramatta, but when they do, they are extremely popular," says Lisa Surian, Director and Sales Consultant at Raine & Horne Parramatta.

Buyers who find the right home near the school of their choice tend to bid more enthusiastically for a property. Due to a bottleneck of enrolments in North Shore schools, some, such as Roseville Public School, only enrol children living within the designated catchment area.

The lengths agents go to

Chris Raptis and Karen Green, of Harcourts Hallett sold a house in Richmond to an overseas Chinese buyer with minimal English skills.

Language was no barrier as they used online Chinese translators to communicate with over \$100,000 of negotiation and they drew insects on pieces of paper to suggest a building inspection.

Nick van Vliet, of First National Real Estate sold a home in McLaren Vale this year where the purchasers were seated at the antique dining suite in the dining room. During negotiations the husband (big strong farmer) leant back in the chair slightly to have it fall apart on him.

He ended on the floor and just let out a roaring laugh. His wife said, 'You've broken a family heirloom, we'll have to buy the property now!', and they did. Nick has since had the chair restored for the vendor, and has met with the buyers and all parties are happy.

Keystart loans

The Real Estate Institute of Western Australia (REIWA) says an increase in eligibility for Keystart loans will benefit potential home owners and the building industry in the south-west.

The State Government recently increased the income cap for singles from \$70,000 to \$110,000 and made it \$130,000 for couples and families.

The criteria for loans have been lifted to allow more people to build their own houses instead of renting.

REIWA's Joe White welcomes the change.

"For every person that gets housed in a place like Margaret River, Dunsborough, Busselton, Capel, it's one less person that has to be housed in an ever expanding Perth

that's already putting a lot of pressure on infrastructure like freeways," he said.

He says it is good news for the building industry.

Houses on the house

But there was something for all bank balances. In Victoria, houses were being offered for free, providing you had the budget to move them.

Websites dedicated to finding homes for anything that was too good for landfill listed several properties for free, including a home in Melbourne's inner city.

The owner of a derelict Sydney home was one of real estate grinders, pocketing \$2.4 million for a flea-ridden house without plumbing or electricity, on the city's outskirts..

It created a buyer frenzy with more than 300 onlookers crowding the overgrown 4000sq m block in West Pennant Hills to see the property, which last exchanged hands in 1986 for \$250,000.

Agent Brian Caba said he had never had so much interest in a home sale.

"In my 20 years of working in real estate, I've never had so much inquiry on any one property, I've never issued so many contracts on one property and I've never had so many registered buyers on one property," Mr Caba said.

"But I don't think I've ever seen a property in worse condition."

<http://www.news.com.au/realstate>

MAKING NEWS

General national news



Mental Health webinar on February 13, 2013 at 12:30 PM AEDT

Employees in all industries are affected, either directly or indirectly by a mental health condition at some point in their career.

Presented by JobAccess, topics to be covered include:

The issues

- What JobAccess is
- The Employment Assistance Fund
- The assistance applied (case studies)
- The benefits

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar. Registrations will be taken in the new year. Contact COSBOA www.cosboa.org.au

Australia second only to Hong Kong in housing unaffordability stakes

Australia is second only to Hong Kong for the cost of housing for the average household, according to an international survey of 325 housing markets. The 8th Annual Demographia International Housing Affordability Survey has found that all major Australian housing markets are 'severely unaffordable', with Sydney and Melbourne coming, respectively, third and fourth most unaffordable cities in the world. We are almost world beaters for pricing families out of housing markets' said Joel Pringle, Campaign Manager for Australians for Affordable Housing. And this is not just a capital city problem. Regional centres like Mildura, Shepparton, Bunbury and Toowoomba are all highlighted in the report as seriously unaffordable.

Parliamentary Group

The Australian Institute of Building (AIB), which represents thousands of Chartered Builders in Australia, has endorsed the Tasmanian Government's announcement of a The Parliamentary Group on Asbestos and Asbestos-Related Disease body to tackle asbestos issues in Tasmania. "AIB applauds this announcement and measures by the Tasmanian Government to reduce the grim statistics from asbestos-related illnesses", said Robert Whittaker, AIB National President. "With Australia having one of the highest rates of asbestos related disease in the world, and around 600 Australians dying each year from asbestos related causes, this announcement is very welcome. On a personal level, my own father died from mesothelioma and I can testify that it was a devastating experience watching him suffer and deteriorate from the condition."

Flight paths

The Real Estate Institute of Queensland (REIQ) and Brisbane Airport Corporation (BAC) have announced a ground-breaking partnership aimed at empowering property buyers and agents through mutual education around current and future flight paths.

The partnership, which is believed to be the first of its kind in Australia, is the result of both organisations' desire to prevent situations where buyers make an investment without fully understanding current and future flight activity near that property.

Through this partnership, both the REIQ and BAC will use a collaborative approach to promote online tools that outline

current flights paths and noise levels, in addition to future flight paths and areas of higher aircraft noise.

www.reiq.com.au

Territory home loans

A new home loan package aimed at helping Territory families achieve their home ownership dream has been announced by the Northern Territory Government.

The Minister for Housing Peter Chandler unveiled the new NT Government-supported home loan assistance package, HomeBuild Access.

It will replace both of the previous government's schemes which are currently costing the Territory \$4M a week.

"The irresponsible former Labor Government schemes actually caused home ownership to go down," Mr Chandler said.

"At a time when the Territory is drowning in Labor debt, we need a better solution.

"The housing policies of the previous government did not help those who needed it most and did not result in expansion of new housing.

"The fact is housing ownership in the Territory has gone down from 47.6% in 2006 to 46.2% in 2011.

"The policies of the previous government resulted in more pressure on housing prices, not less, putting the purchase of a new home out of the reach of low to middle income workers.

For more information on HomeBuild Access visit http://www.housing.nt.gov.au/affordable_housing

POLITICAL WATCH

Information and news from government



NSW Government reverses Labor's ban on electric hot water systems

Energy Minister Chris Hartcher announced the reversal of Labor's decision to phase out electric hot water systems, meaning households will no longer be forced into buying new systems.

The NSW Labor Government signed up to the Federal Government policy of banning the installation of electric hot water heaters in new houses in December 2010. Stage two of the phase out, which involves the banning of electric systems in existing houses, was intended to commence this year.

"The NSW Government remains committed to doing everything it can to assist low income households and facilitating the delivery of essential services at the lowest cost to all consumers," Mr Hartcher said.

Approximately two thirds of NSW households do not have the option of gas hot water from a reticulated system, meaning consumers without gas options would be forced to invest on alternatives including heat pumps or solar heating.

Surge in standard business reporting take-up

More than 100,000 lodgements have been received through the new Standard Business Reporting (SBR) system since the beginning of July, about nine times the number of lodgements for the same period in 2011.

Under SBR, Australian businesses are able to use SBR-enabled software to prepare and lodge key government forms directly from their software to agencies participating in the SBR program.

"Standard Business Reporting helps

to drive productivity by removing unnecessary or duplicated data in business reporting obligations," Assistant Treasurer, David Bradbury, said.

App to make livable housing a reality

Designing and building 'livable homes' suitable for people in all stages of life will be much easier, with a new iPhone and iPad application to be developed with the help of \$60,000 in Australian Government funding.

Speaking at the RI Accessible Housing Forum in Canberra, the Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities and Carers, Jan McLucas said the app will help homebuyers, homeowners and the building industry better understand the Livable Housing Design Guidelines developed by Livable Housing Australia.

Livable Housing Australia promotes greater understanding of the value of designing houses that are accessible to all.

For further information on Livable Housing Australia and the Livable Housing Design Guidelines go to www.livablehousingaustralia.org.au.

Small business red-tape

Small business people across the country are becoming more and more anxious about the growing red-tape and compliance burden being placed on their business, according to the Coalition.

Shadow Minister for Small Business Bruce Billson said proprietors were too often being dragged away from servicing customers and pursuing opportunities to do paper work which served very little purpose.

"Red-tape and compliance burdens

have been flung in the way of small business like no other sector, making what should be flat running seem like a steeple chase," Mr Billson said.

"For a small business person running a cafe, newsagency, or lawn mowing business it means less time with customers, less time earning money, less time pursuing leads and opportunities and less time with their families.

"Under this Government, 20,884 regulations have been introduced and only 104 repealed. Not the 'one in one out' promised by Labor in 2007.

The discussion paper can be downloaded from www.liberal.org.au

State of Australian cities

While Australia's major cities remain among the world's most livable and are increasingly powered by the knowledge industries of the future, they are also more than ever being affected by extreme weather events and struggling to house the continuing influx of new residents.

These are just a few of the findings and trends contained in the latest 'report card' on the progress and performance of our nation's eighteen biggest cities: *State of Australian Cities 2012*.

Compiled by the Major Cities Unit within the Department of Infrastructure, the first two editions generated enormous interest and have been downloaded two million times.

A full copy of the report along with individual factsheets for each of the cities is now available at: <http://www.infrastructure.gov.au/soac/>.

THE WORLD

Property news from around the world



Dark History

A couple has sued a Toronto area real estate firm, an agent and the home's former owners for allegedly failing to reveal the home's history.

Home owners Eric and Sade-Lea Tekoniemi thought they had bought their dream home but it turned into a house of nightmares after they learned the house had been the scene of a horrific double murder 15 years ago.

The couple claim that the murders have "stigmatized, psychologically impacted, and tainted the property," according to the lawsuit. Sade-Lea Tekoniemi alleges she had suffered panic attacks, severe depression, and sleep and mood disorders because of the murder revelation and living in the house.

The Tekoniemis are seeking \$450,000 in damages. They say they want to sell the home but are looking to recover some of the depreciation in the home's value since the disclosure had not been made to them. The claims made in the lawsuit have not been proven in court.

Toronto Times

Video marketing

Welcome to the world of real estate video marketing. Technology advancements have increased the ability to automatically market homes for sale online.

Tech Media Marketing, Inc's automated real estate virtual tour marketing system automatically creates slideshow virtual tours from a data feed from the local real estate agent or the real estate company's website vendor.

The videos are optimized for YouTube which is the #1 video search engine and #2 search engine overall behind Google. Remember, YouTube is also owned by Google.

The videos are uploaded to the company YouTube channel and then syndicated to the company Facebook and Twitter social media pages.

This is an easy way to gain increased exposure for homes for sale on the internet.

Embedding the listing videos to real estate websites and blog sites adds increased SEO value to the website and also to the video.

Tech Media Marketing, Inc's real estate video marketing system also includes Quick Response or QR Codes and Text Marketing for the videos that link to an individual mobile listing webpage with the listing video. This product addresses every area of today's real estate internet marketing needs – video, social media, SEO and mobile marketing all in one automated package.

Read more [here](#).

Predatory behaviour

A man in the US has been charged with allegedly trying to lure real estate agents into model homes with intentions to sexually assault them, police say.

Frank A. Yeager, 29, is in police custody and has been charged with one count of criminal attempt rape, a first-degree felony, as well as several misdemeanor charges.

A real estate rep told police that a man entered the office requesting to see a

model home. The woman told police she had a strange feeling about the man since he was not asking for any information about the home to purchase and so she allowed the man to tour the home himself.

About 45 minutes later, the woman said the man returned to the office and told her there was a water leak in the model home and insisted she come look at it. But the man quickly fled as soon as a male co-worker entered the office.

The female agent said she went into the model home and found no water leak in the bedroom. She found the bedroom curtains had been closed and the lights turned off, police reported.

The woman was able to provide police with a description of the man. Police discovered that there were several reports from real estate agents of a man who matched the description.

Police obtained search warrants of Yeager's residence and truck. According to police, they discovered a knapsack containing two handguns and ammunition, a metal chain with padlocks and duct tape, knives, matches, gloves, rope, a black ski mask, and electrical cable stripper package. Also in the truck, police say they found additional duct tape, a crow bar, and real estate brochures. Police discovered drawings and writings of Yeager's alleged plan.

Yeager is being held in police custody on a \$500,000 bail, awaiting a preliminary hearing scheduled for later this week.

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