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KNIFE & STEEL



Queensland Retail Council Report

By Kerry Melrose

The Queensland Retail Council meeting in April was well attended and addressed the status of several projects.

Council has been working on an apprenticeship proposal with employment company Sarina Russo.

The project was to provide training in the form of a pre-apprenticeship which would provide work ready employees to AMIC members. Unfortunately, the Federal Government has made significant changes to funding for Registered Training Organisations and Sarina Russo has lost the funding for this project.

It was resolved that alternate funding should be sought under a different program but before this is done a survey is to be distributed to members to establish the capability to employ apprentices in the current economic conditions. The survey is enclosed in this edition and you are encouraged to complete and fax it back to AMIC as soon as possible.

On a brighter note, Council reviewed the Domestic Marketing Plan for MLA for 2009 – 2010. Funding has been increased \$25m and there will be three promotions for Beef and three promotions for Lamb during the year. This is in line with the AMIC request to increase promotions from two to three during the year so Council is very pleased with the outcome.

All other Domestic Marketing programs have maintained or increased funding including the Nutritional program, which addresses the benefits of eating red meat, and the Retail Presence which ensures MLA is represented in each state and that the Red Meat Networking Club is funded.

The National Retail Council has provided strong input to the revision of the Meat Industry Strategic Plan. This plan identifies the strategic goals and acknowledges the key issues for the meat industry and our retail members for 2010-2015. In turn this directs the flow of grower and processor levies, particularly in meat promotion.

The following Strategic Goals have been agreed:

1. Improving Efficiency
2. Growing Demand and Improving Standards
3. Resources – address labour skills and OH&S
4. Regulation – Adapting to environmental and regulatory initiatives
5. Improving Industry viability

Council discussed the details of these goals and agreed to support them.

AMIC has made several submissions to counteract Government proposals which, if implemented, would otherwise result in additional regulation at state level

in the coming years. These include a proposal to remove preservative from sausages (opposed on food safety grounds by AMIC), additional nutritional information on packaged products (opposed by AMIC on the grounds that the current information should be reviewed first) and a proposal that independent butchers should be AUS-MEAT accredited to sell meat (opposed by AMIC on cost and lack of benefits). Each submission is considered by Council and input provided. AMIC will always support genuine food safety improvement recommendations but much of what is being presented does not meet that criteria and will only add costs to members.

AMIC has been successful in having Meat Retailing excluded from the first Modern Awards for General Retail. This decision handed down in late December clears the way for AMIC to continue with the submission that there should be a separate Modern Meat Award. This matter will be considered by the Australian Industrial Relations Commission in the near future. Further information is available elsewhere in this Newsletter and in the National Newsletter.

You are welcome to attend the meetings of the Retail Council. Please contact Gail Butler if you require more details of meeting dates or any of the issues raised above.

New Federal IR/Workplace Laws – they are nearly here

Please find an insert with these Newsletters. It contains a fairly comprehensive summary of the new laws. Some changes apply from 1 July 2009 and some from 1 January 2010. They are far reaching and, at this stage, only apply to national employers (Pty Ltd entities). They do not apply to entities operating as sole traders or partnerships - except for sole-traders or partnerships in the state of Victoria and the ACT and NT. For the laws to apply to all other sole traders or partnerships across Australia, the remaining states need to hand their IR powers over to Canberra as Victoria did some 18 years ago. We will keep you informed if this occurs.

If the new laws apply to you, please read the document carefully. If the laws do not apply you may wish to incorporate your business so that they do apply.

Unfair dismissal laws have changed and apply irrespective of the number of employees. These changes happen on 1 July so you need to understand them and have only a few weeks to do so. New laws apply to the making of federal agreements and the bargaining process. These changes occur on 1 July. New Modern Awards will replace all the federal awards now applying and this will occur on 1 January.

There will be a Modern Meat Industry Award but, at this point, it has not been published by the Commission. The reason is because the Commission has been given the task of reducing over 3000 awards down to about 80 industry awards and they are judge and jury with no appeal. A Modern Meat Industry Award will be finalized by September. **There is much more so if in any doubt about any of the subject matter contained in the insert please contact AMIC.**



The 2009 Queensland Regional Sausage King Competition

The competition has been an exciting one so far with some multiple winners and inventive sausages up for judging (If you can have sausage on a pizza, why not pizza in a

sausage?) We've also had some terrific support from our sponsors, judges and teams at all of our venues who have all helped to make each heat an astounding success.



Charles Van Beelen, (l) Bli Bli Butchery, receiving his prize for winning Open Class/Gourmet presented by Errol Rees from Kerry Ingredients. Charles also won the Poultry and Australian Lamb categories as well as winning 1st, 2nd and 3rd in the Wet Dish category of the Butchers Choice Competition! Well done on your sweep Charles!



Norm Milner of Norm Milner Butcher presented with 1st place for Poultry by Melinda Gibson, AMIST. Norm took 5 out of 6 categories for Traditional Australian Pork, Lamb/Open Class, Continental and Gourmet/Open Class as well as Poultry! Congratulations Norm!

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR 2009 SAUSAGE KING SPONSORS

