

June 2009

# TASSIE NEWS



## Retail Council Report

By Thomas Beuke

**The Tasmanian Retail Council May meeting progressed a number of important member issues.**

**Food Safety Plans** – the food safety plans, which were distributed to members late last year, should be taking a preference in the list of activities that need to be completed. Council has approved a questionnaire to be completed by members who intend implementing this Food Safety Plan. It is included in this edition as a fax back and you are requested to complete and fax to 02 9086 2201 to help AMIC to help you with the implementation.

If you have your own Food Safety Plan already implemented you do not have to implement the AMIC Food Safety Plan. The choice is yours.

**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.

**Food Safety Legislation** – Council reviewed a Discussion Paper on a proposal to reform the food safety legislation in Tasmania. The Department of Primary Industries and Water has provided the paper as a basis for comments before proceeding with any changes. AMIC will provide a formal reply to this proposal and an article will appear in the next Newsletter.

**Fat & Bone collections** – Council noted that the timely collection of fat & bone from butcher shops is an essential service for a range of reasons. The recent incidents of delays in collections from some shops caused major headaches with little choice of how to

find alternatives for the service. One report was a delay of nine days between collections, with a three week gap of no collections at all from another source. Both examples are obviously not reasonable or acceptable.

The Council understands that this issue does not affect all shops, it depends on your location, but we would be interested in hearing from members who have experienced a problem with your collections of fat & bone. Please give me a call on 03 6362 4062.

**King Island Abattoir** – The recent closure of the King Island abattoir will have an impact directly for the employees and the economy on King Island but also for the rest of the State and nationally where the products are distributed.

King Island has a well earned reputation for quality food products and it's a certainty that this will need to be protected and enhanced. The Company, JB Swift, which is the largest meat processor in Australia (previously owned by AMH), has indicated that the reason for the closure was the need for a review of the business. Let's hope that a review is done quickly and the plant is reopened.

**Council member vacancies** – The Tasmanian Retail Council held its March 2009 meeting by teleconference, giving all Councillors the opportunity of participating in the meeting without the need to travel to a meeting destination. It is an efficient and effective way to conduct a meeting when time and distance are issues to consider. The Council will alternate meetings for the remainder of this year between teleconferences and face-to-face meetings. Members are invited to participate in these meetings. Please contact your AMIC Office on 03 6231 3333 for details.

**Council members** - A list of Council members is provided for your information to assist you with input to issues affecting the Retail sector of our industry.

There are currently two vacant positions on the Council and we would welcome members who are interested taking either of those positions. Please feel free to contact myself or any of the other Councillors if you would like to discuss.

COUNCIL MEMBER	POSITION	BUSINESS
Thomas Beuke	Chair	Classic BFS
Phil Groves	Vice Chair	The Sausage Shop
Marcus Vermey	Councillor	Vermey's Quality Meats
Katrina Mundy	Councillor	Mundy & Sons
Shane Mundy	Councillor	Hill Street Gourmet Meats
Vacant	Councillor	
Vacant	Councillor	

## New Federal IR/Workplace Laws - they are nearly here for WA & Tasmania

For nearly 100 years meat industry employers in WA and Tasmania – whether a 'Pty Ltd' or sole trader or a partnership entity – were operating under the state IR systems. That somewhat changed with the 2006 WorkChoices legislation of the Howard Federal Government when national employers (Pty Ltd entities) were partially brought under the federal system. The Rudd Government has now fully integrated national employers into the federal system.

Please find an insert with the Newsletters. It contains a fairly comprehensive summary of the new laws. Some changes apply from 1 July 2009 and some from 1 January 2010.

These new laws will apply to national employers (Pty Ltd entities), including national employers in WA and Tasmania. They do not apply to entities operating as sole traders or partnerships in WA and Tasmania. For the laws to apply to sole traders or partnerships in WA and Tasmania, the state governments would have to hand over their IR powers to Canberra just as Victoria did some 18 years ago. We will keep you informed if this occurs.

**The changes are far reaching and if the new laws apply to you, please read the document carefully.**

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 awards now applying to national employers. This will occur on 1 January.

There will be a Modern Meat Industry Award applying to all national employers in WA and Tasmania. At this point it has not been published by the Federal 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 are many more changes that will affect national employers in WA and Tasmania. If in any doubt about any of the subject matter contained in the insert please contact AMIC.**