

# President's Annual Report 2009

2009 has been an important year of change for PHIIA. We have seen consolidation, unification and challenges, which reconfirmed the importance of this Association.

At the beginning of the year, the necessity for a comprehensive Code of Conduct was again identified and work initiated late in the year. June saw Gerry Carton (Founding CEO) retire and we welcomed Peter Kerestes as the new PHIIA CEO. Peter embraced his new role with a vengeance and faced a number of challenges thrown our way by the various Government entities.

## **Medicare Levy Surcharge**

The introduction of changes to the MLS late last calendar year have not had a full year effect and any conclusions as to their efficacy are premature. Compounding this change is the proposed further change to MLS envisaged by the simultaneous change to the Private Health Insurance Rebate Scheme. This tiered proposal, by the Federal Government, at the time of this address, has been rejected by Parliament and awaits reintroduction in 3 months' time. Lobbying against this proposal was aggressively pursued and will be again in the future.

## **Internet**

The newly developed innovative internet site is almost on line and members are urged to contact our CEO for details. Moneytime has generously devoted considerable time and resources to the development and hosting of the site.

## **Membership**

Our membership is continually growing and we are pleased to welcome back IMAN and AON, and welcome Cannex as our newest PHIIA members. Membership contributions have grown and contributed significantly to our strong financial position, which does make a pleasant change as compared to past experiences.

## **GFC**

The Global Financial Crisis led to a tightening of market conditions in the second half of the year, which most members were able to escape relatively unscathed. In fact, membership on voluntary schemes and the retail market actually grew in the 2009 financial year confirming that people need security in difficult times. This growth was undoubtedly also assisted by the poor state of the Public Health System.

### **457 Visa Changes**

This developed in the final two weeks of the financial year and involved intensive lobbying by PHIA and others in the early part of the new financial year. If members do need any update, please contact the CEO.

The Executive Committee and Members were very sorry to see our Founding CEO, Gerry Carton, retire. Over the years Gerry has worked tirelessly for the establishment, growth and reputation of PHIA. I would like to take this opportunity to offer him a very special “**Thank You**” on behalf of All of our Members.

I would also like to thank our Executive Committee members for selflessly giving up so much of their valuable time for the common interest and continued development of our industry.