

Welcome



Eleanor Scully, Richard Mainey, Garry Lee, Gary Rebgetz, Lorraine Smith and Richard Barwick

As our Annual General Meeting is just one month away, the Board has listed several challenges we'll face over the next 12 months as a Club, and wish to share these with members. You must remember that more than one-half of the Board are in their first three year term, so listing these priorities is essential. The CMCA Board does have its working document, the Strategic Plan 2017-2020, but the issues here are those that need to be addressed as a matter of priority.

At the AGM, members will be asked to vote on the proposed changes to the current Constitution. These changes were put forward by you, the members, to the Constitution Review Working Party. The Board has endorsed these changes in total as we did not believe we should make any alterations or omissions to those recommendations put forward by the Working Party. This Working Party was a group of volunteer members who represented many varied years of Membership and involvement with the Club, including a Life Member who is also a Foundation Member. The Board would hope that all members interested in these changes will ensure that they understand the changes and exercise their right to vote.

The Board does see and hear comments that these proposed changes to the Constitution are just a 'grab' to grow the membership. This comment does seem a little strange in that membership growth is happening anyway, with a 6.5 per cent growth in 2015/2016 and a more modest growth in 2016/17 of between 3 to 4 per cent. This comment is also contrary to the belief that the more RV travellers the CMCA can be seen to represent, the stronger our voice with Government and Industry. Why did previous CMCA Boards

establish MoTOURING, now RV Clubs of Australia Limited, if this was not the outcome they wanted to achieve?

It is hard not to bring in the 'commercial world' here as what we have now is a number of other organisations, whether they be constituted Clubs or Facebook groups all trying to provide what our Club has done for the last 31 years. The reality is that if we don't compete in this market, it is likely that our membership will eventually diminish. We live in a competitive world.

It seems that another fear of members with a larger membership is that we will lose the Club physique and friendships. The Board intends to continue to facilitate a National Rally, State-based smaller Rallies, and our Chapter and Special Interest Group structure. We know now that these events do not meet all members' needs. So how does the current CMCA culture exist? It does because individual members seek out other members whilst travelling, to enjoy each other's company wherever that may be. There is no good reason that this will cease if we increase our membership.

The role of the Board in this process is to ensure the continued successful operations of the Club. The Board sees that this discussion and voting needs to be objective, without emotion and no individual personalities being targeted. It is not about 'them' and 'us', it is all about the CMCA. We need to ensure the long-term strength and viability of our Club to protect our 'Freedom of Choice'.

The second real issue presently facing the CMCA Board and CEO is the production of our monthly magazine, *The Wanderer*. Unfortunately, the Board has had to make a recent decision to change our publisher, the second time in 12 months. We went to the marketplace in the

first half of 2016, and thought a change to a larger publisher, one with a national exposure to attract more advertisers to help cover the cost was the right decision. It was announced to members in the 2016 Annual Reports that 'print media' was diminishing and no longer could we expect a publisher to pay us a fixed retainer to produce the monthly issue of *The Wanderer*. The financial viability of *The Wanderer* is about having a certain level of advertising revenue, as the CMCA now takes the risk of producing the magazine.

In interviewing three prospective publishers, it was indicated to us by the successful applicant that the production of *The Wanderer* would be 'break-even' after the initial six months. This was far from the actual results. It all started out reasonable and so it seemed that they were going to be able to deliver on this proposal. But by the end of the six month initial period, the advertising revenue was decreasing and *The Wanderer* was costing the CMCA some \$50,000 per month to have it delivered to you. The Board could not let this continue so has severed ties with that publisher and from August has engaged a new provider. We should say that the Board was not unhappy with the quality of *The Wanderer* over the last 12 months and in fact, has received very positive feedback from the members. But unfortunately, it was a product that the CMCA could simply not afford in the longer term. So, this is very much a 'watch this space' and the Board would be happy to receive any feedback from members on this issue.

The last issue that the Board would like to raise with members is that of communication. Over the last two years, we have gone from no monthly newsletters, to one and now two monthly newsletters, we have our CMCA Facebook page, our Member Forum is back and running well and we have our much more user-friendly website. And of course, we still have the *The Wanderer*. But the Board still feels that we are failing to encompass the wider membership in all the important issues facing the Club. Feedback that we have received from members, particularly around the proposed Constitutional changes and the wider range of new Member Benefits would suggest that we still need to improve this communication aspect of the CMCA. Let us know your thoughts.

*Travel Safely and
Laugh More, Live Longer.
Garry Lee A67278
Chairman, on behalf of the CMCA
Board of Directors*