

Journal

JUN 2010
VOL 61/05



digging deep

REINSW member gives back to the community

Rural forecast
Rain makes the market grow?

Photo workshop
Expert tips on property photography

Warehousing 101
What all commercial agents should know

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FROM RAY WHITE DUBBO.

The *Real Estate Journal* is a member only publication from the Real Estate Institute of New South Wales.

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Promising outlook despite rain clouds



WHILE MOST OF OUR MEMBERS IN COUNTRY AREAS HAVE BEEN BLESSED WITH RAIN OVER THE PAST 12 MONTHS, MANY STILL FACE CHALLENGES. BUT THE OUTLOOK FOR THE NEXT FEW YEARS IS POSITIVE.

June is the month of cold snaps, end of financial year and tax time – not a very exciting combination of events. However, there is great confidence in the marketplace at the moment and many opportunities to build and grow our real estate businesses.

The latest product offerings from REINSW aim to give member businesses the tools they need to succeed. propertyDATA.com.au and realestateVIEW.com.au were launched this month, delivering to agents across the state industry-owned and backed property data solutions. The July edition of the *Real Estate Journal* will include coverage of the official launch, which took place at the Sydney Opera House. Members will also be contacted by REINSW shortly with more information.

Spotlight on rural agents

In this edition, we look at the rural property market and issues affecting both rural and regional real estate agents.

While most of our members in country areas have been blessed with rain over the past 12 months,

many still face challenges. But the outlook for the next few years is positive, says REINSW Rural Chapter Chair Phil Rourke, who provides an overview of the rural property market and how weather conditions will impact this sector (page 8).

Agents give back

Each year real estate professionals raise hundreds of thousands of dollars for charity. Heartfelt grassroots efforts are leaving their mark on communities and touching people's lives. REINSW member Rod Crowfoot is one agent who has a reputation for his community leadership. In our cover story, we look at how Rod and agents like him are improving the reputation of real estate agents through ongoing charity work (page 12).

We also catch up with Colin Rooke, Chair of the REINSW Valuers Chapter, whose contribution to real estate has made him a well-known and respected industry figure. In a candid interview, Colin talks to the *Real Estate Journal* about his professional achievements and conveys his opinion on the state of the real estate profession (page 34).

I would like to commend Colin and the many other committed men and women in our industry who give their time, passion and experience to our individual Chapters at REINSW. They too are unsung heroes and play a vital role in the development of policy and business initiatives that affect us all.



Wayne Stewart
REINSW President

A tax by any other name



THIS *AD VALOREM* TAX WILL BE LIKE AN EXTRA ROUND OF STAMP DUTY THAT COULD FURTHER PRESSURE ARTIFICIAL INFLATION OF PROPERTY PRICES AS VENDORS TRY TO PASS THE TAX ON TO THE NEXT BUYER.

With everyone's attention on the release of the Federal budget, the NSW Minister for Lands saw an opportunity to quietly announce a new *ad valorem* (according to value) registration tax on property transactions. The obscure Latin phrase will add a 0.2% tax on registration of transfers of properties between \$500,000 and \$1 million, and 0.25% tax for properties valued at more than \$1 million from 1 July 2010.

Recently, REINSW met with the Leader of the NSW Liberals & Nationals, Barry O'Farrell, to lobby for his support. We conveyed our strong opposition to this blatant 'grab for cash', which will simply burden NSW property buyers with an additional tax. I'm pleased to report that REINSW has secured an undertaking from Mr O'Farrell to repeal the *ad valorem* tax should the NSW Liberals & Nationals be elected in the upcoming State election.

Implications of the *ad valorem* tax*

The current State Government has once again targeted property in a desperate attempt to supplement its spending. But there are severe ramifications if the trend should continue.

This *ad valorem* tax will be like an extra round of stamp duty that could further pressure artificial inflation of property prices as vendors try to pass the tax on to the next buyer (called cascading). Another concern is the effect of another tax on the housing market. By increasing the cost of buying a property in NSW, potential buyers will be faced with another disincentive to home ownership or investment.

There are also several areas of uncertainty that the NSW Government has not yet clarified. Perhaps the most concerning is the lack of information around whether there will be exemptions

under the new scheme for the new tax. How the value of a property will be determined and whether buyers will have a right of objection are other issues the NSW Liberals & Nationals will raise in parliament.

REINSW is now in talks with other bodies in the real estate industry such as the Urban Development Institute of Australia, the Property Council of Australia and the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors.

We believe a united voice will strengthen our case to government and impress up on decision-makers the many detrimental effects the proposed new tax will have on the property sector and, consequently, the state economy.

We have written to Premier Keneally seeking an urgent meeting to discuss this new tax, as well as the proposed changes to the *Residential Tenancies Act*.

REINSW will continue to seek a reversal of the new tax and we will keep you informed of our lobbying activities in this space.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tim McKibbin'. The signature is stylized and somewhat abstract.

Tim McKibbin
REINSW CEO

* At the time of publication the NSW budget 2010-11, which is expected to give more detail on the new tax, had not yet been released.

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iPhone app for house hunters

The Commonwealth Bank is launching an iPhone application that provides instant access to property data using the phone's camera and location devices. By taking a photograph of the property on their iPhone, users will be able to view information such as past sales history through a Google Maps view or as 'augmented reality'—a display in which simulated imagery, graphics, or symbology is superimposed on a view of a physical real-world environment.

House hunters can also switch to a list or bird's eye view for insights on properties matching their search criteria.

According to Mark Murray, General Manager Consumer Marketing at the Commonwealth Bank: "Home buyers and sellers can easily access a host of customised information, tools and insights on every home in Australia."

Suicide sparks safety concerns

Following a suicide at the Joanna O'Dea public housing estate in Camperdown NSW, Sydney Greens Councillor Irene Doutney has called on Housing NSW to ensure better maintenance of the building. According to residents, it is the eleventh time someone has jumped from the 10-storey building in the past 10 years.

"The building is home to a large number of people with mental illness and substance abuse issues," says Doutney. "Yet Housing NSW has provided no security in the building."

Housing NSW has agreed to carry out a safety audit on the building. Doutney has requested that Housing Minister David Borger implement the findings of the safety audit as a matter of priority.

Landowners warned about land clearing

To encourage compliance with native vegetation laws, the NSW Department of Environment Climate Change and Water (DECCW) has issued advisory letters to landholders across the state. The document includes before and after satellite images indicating that land clearing has occurred on their property.

DECCW Director-General Lisa Corbyn says the letters are part of an ongoing education program to inform landowners of the proper channels available if they want to clear native vegetation.

"We've been using satellite technology for some time to identify changes in vegetation cover that may warrant further investigation," Corbyn says. "Now we are also using the technology as an education tool."

The letters support other tools used by DECCW to encourage compliance with legislation, including strategic investigations, penalty notices, stop work orders, remedial directions and warning letters.



Paying too much for public housing?

NSW Housing Minister David Borger has denied claims the State Government has overspent on property acquisition for social housing projects.

Under the Rudd Government's Nation Building Economic Stimulus Plan, more than 6000 homes for the disadvantaged and homeless are being built across NSW at a cost of \$1.9 billion.

Borger says he welcomes scrutiny of the figures following accusations that the State Government is paying more than the market value for land.

Housing bubble to burst?

Australia is in the middle of an unsustainable housing bubble that could burst at any moment, says Edward Chancellor, whose book *Crunch Time for Credit?* predicted the global credit bust of 2007.

"The housing market is falling under ... the sheer weight of its overvaluation and lack of affordability," he says, adding that prices would have to fall by more than a third to reach fair value – although some of this fall would be cushioned by income growth.

"If house prices were to revert to their historic long-term average (ratio of average price to average income) they would fall quite considerably," he says.

Luci Ellis, head of the Reserve Bank's Financial Stability Department, has dismissed the notion of a housing bubble in Australia. But she has warned that under current economic conditions potential home buyers could overextend themselves.

"The more that housing prices rise, the more that some people might feel that they must stretch their finances to buy a home," she says. "And if household balance sheets were to become overstretched, household spending would become overly sensitive to income shocks. Such an outcome, if it occurred, would not be conducive to macroeconomic stability."



Farmer property rights protected

The NSW Opposition has ensured key amendments protecting NSW farmers' property rights have been included in the Mining and Petroleum Amendment Bill.

NSW Farmers' Association President Charles Armstrong says: "Farmers have been lobbying hard on this issue ... they had grave fears for farmers' property rights if this Bill had been passed through the Upper House unchanged.

"The Association believes farming and mining can co-exist, but protection provided by legislation is vital to ensure balance is maintained," he adds.

The amendments will remove, in part, clauses that would have had the effect of:

- preventing landholders from including access conditions relevant to the protection of their property and to take private enforcement action;
- holders of prospecting titles being able to transfer prospecting titles without the consent of the landholder; and
- enabling holders of prospecting titles to vary agreed access arrangements by application to the Land and Environment Court.

"Mining is important to the economy but so is agriculture. We need to ensure that the regulatory framework for mining and gas delivers long-term sustainable outcomes for NSW and our regional communities," says Armstrong.



Government must stimulate growth in housing, say analysts

The NSW economy is the worst performing in Australia, according to analysts. The latest State of the States report by CommSec recommends the State Government urgently introduce initiatives to stimulate growth in housing construction, business investment and jobs.

NSW ranked last or second last in key economic indicators including home building starts, construction work and economic growth. The ACT took the top spot, enjoying economic growth 28% above its decade average in the December 2009 quarter due to solid housing and commercial construction, and high public service employment.

Damp creates the desired effect

LONG-RANGE WEATHER FORECASTS FOR NSW PREDICT HIGHER THAN AVERAGE RAINFALL IN SPRING AND SUMMER 2010.

This is a positive sign for rural real estate agents, says REINSW Rural Chapter Chair Phil Rourke. He believes that if the predictions eventuate, and continue for two to three seasons, an upswing in the rural property market will follow.

"The current season is looking very promising ... a good finish to the

year would result in a general return to profitability for the rural economy, which would in turn boost real estate sales," says Phil.

The legacy of more than eight years of drought is behind the slowdown in rural property transactions over the past 12 months, he explains.

"The tough, prolonged drought period, coupled with a lack of funds due to banks tightening their lending policies, has certainly discouraged farmers from

expanding – but it has encouraged them to look at selling, which has put pressure on the supply/demand ratio," says Phil.

But the long-term outlook is more positive, he adds. Along with more favourable weather conditions, Phil cites foreign interests in securing Australian agriculture as factors that will help drive growth in rural areas.

"The rural scene is very sound, with a number of overseas equity

"A GOOD FINISH TO THE YEAR WOULD RESULT IN A GENERAL RETURN TO PROFITABILITY FOR THE RURAL ECONOMY."

funds and sovereign funds looking to invest money in Australia for food security," he says. "They see rural Australia as a good industry to invest in." ♦

Online portal accused of lifting listings

LESS THAN A MONTH AFTER ACCEPTING GOVERNMENT FUNDING, REAL ESTATE PORTAL ALLHOMES.COM.AU IS ENTANGLED IN A COPYRIGHT BREACH DISPUTE, REPORTS ONLINE PUBLICATION SMART COMPANY.

ALLHomes was one of the first companies to receive funding from Commercialisation Australia Online, the newly-formed government initiative designed to assist researchers, entrepreneurs and companies.

The alleged copyright breach was discovered when competitor realestateVIEW.com.au noticed more than 8000 of its listings on ALLHomes.com.au overnight, says Petra Sprekos, General Manager of

THE ALLEGED COPYRIGHT BREACH WAS DISCOVERED WHEN A COMPETITOR ... NOTICED MORE THAN 8000 OF ITS LISTINGS ON ALLHOMES.COM.AU.

realestateVIEW.com.au, an online portal majority owned by the Real Estate Institute of Victoria and in partnership with most Real Estate Institutes nationally.

According to Petra, there are several challenges to starting an online portal. A new start-up has to try

and sell a product without listings or subscribers – and both depend on the existence of the other.

"You need lots of listings to entice agents, because they want to be part of a comprehensive database. And you need agents to provide the listings," she says.

She goes on to explain that realestateVIEW.com.au's affiliation with Real Estate Institutes across Australia gives her site a 'leg up'.

"Our partnership with the Institutes means we can more easily get agents on board with our product, who in turn give us listings," she says.

"Taking this type of product to market without listings or subscribers is extremely difficult, which is probably why ALLHomes had to scrape listings together to kickstart their business."

ALLHomes was not available for comment at the time of publication. ♦



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REINSW member wins family business award

ANNANDALE-BASED CALLAGHER ESTATE AGENTS WAS THE FOURTH GENERATION OWNER CATEGORY WINNER AT THE 2010 NSW & ACT FAMILY BUSINESS OF THE YEAR AWARDS.

Callagher Directors, Cary and David Giezekamp, accepted the award at the Family Business Australia (FBA) Awards luncheon on 29 April 2010. The fourth generation owners thanked "staff, family, friends and loyal clientele for their support".

NSW FBA Chairman Terry Rowney says a business like Callagher Estate Agents, which has been operating for more than 100 years in Australia, deservedly reaches icon status in the family business sector.

"This award is a perfect recognition of the tenacity of the family itself to continue evolving with the changing

times, particularly in an industry sector such as real estate which has seen some very tumultuous and challenging times over the past century," says Rowney.

Joseph Callagher, great-grandfather of the current owners, established the real estate office in Annandale in 1899. Cary and David have been with the business for 23 years and 21 years respectively.

"Our father Bob joined the business in the 1960s, having realised a passion for real estate. Both David and I would come to work after school and experience first-hand this exciting industry and in no time we were hooked," says Cary.

"It's been over 20 years and the passion hasn't faded at all." ♦



LEFT TO RIGHT: CALLAGHER ESTATE AGENTS OWNERS DAVID GIEZEKAMP, CARY GIEZEKAMP AND NSW FBA CHAIRMAN TERRY ROWNEY.



FBA AWARDS DELEGATES VISIT CALLAGHER ESTATE AGENTS.

In memoriam

Former REINSW President Alex Clifford

ALEXANDER (ALEX) DAVID CLIFFORD, REINSW PRESIDENT FROM 1962 TO 1963, DIED ON 8 APRIL 2010. HE WAS 94 YEARS OLD.

At Alex Clifford's funeral, attendees heard little-known facts about the former REINSW President, including his humble beginnings in real estate.

In the eulogy, son-in-law Richard Thomas spoke about Mr Clifford's first job in real estate working for Killen Thomas in Sydney's CBD.

It didn't take long for Mr Clifford to become a more prominent figure in the real estate profession. He joined the REINSW Board in 1956 and was awarded the status of REINSW Life Fellow in 1972.

Former REINSW President Robert Bevan remembers Mr Clifford's dedication to both the state and national Institutes.

"He very seriously accepted the responsibility of Treasurer of REIA," says Mr Bevan, who adds that Mr Clifford was particularly effective in this role because "he was a disciplinarian – he was meticulous and he didn't suffer fools gladly".

Mr Clifford's greatest contribution, says Mr Bevan, was being an advocate for REINSW members at both official and informal occasions. "He was part of the 'old and bold' – a group of industry veterans who were known for their strong opinions and

"HE WAS PART OF THE 'OLD AND BOLD' – A GROUP OF INDUSTRY VETERANS WHO WERE KNOWN FOR THEIR STRONG OPINIONS AND FIERCELY PROTECTED THE RIGHTS OF REAL ESTATE AGENTS."

fiercely protected the rights of real estate agents."

Mr Clifford played a pivotal role in the revision of REINSW's Constitution in the 1950s and

petitioned for the right of different states to achieve adequate representation. "He certainly influenced the evolution of REINSW," says Mr Bevan.

"He was also a devoted husband and father to three daughters," he adds. A personal friend, Mr Bevan says that when Mr Clifford retired to Avalon in Sydney's northern suburbs he became a boating and fishing enthusiast.

It was during these final years that Mr Bevan would regularly visit the former REINSW President. "I would see Alex every couple of weeks and share a whisky with him," says Mr Bevan. "He will be sadly missed by the older generation of agents." ♦

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• real estate gives back



BY LEANNE MEZRANI

Rod Crowfoot is one of many real estate agents whose ongoing charity work is giving the industry a good name.

Too often, good works by real estate professionals go unnoticed. This is due, in part, to many taking a grassroots approach to charity work and reinvesting in their local areas. However, their quiet generosity is gradually changing public perception. The image of the slick salesman is fading, with more agents being recognised for their charitable contributions and becoming valued members of the community. ►

Take REINSW member Rod Crowfoot from Ray White Dubbo. He regularly contributes to a variety of charities and not-for-profit organisations. But what Rod is most well known for is his leadership role in the region's annual Charity Golf Day. The event, which is organised by Rod and other REINSW member agents, brings people from Dubbo and its surrounding areas together to raise money for a nominated charity.

"THEY MAY BE COMPETITORS IN THE PROFESSIONAL ARENA, BUT THESE REAL ESTATE AGENTS BAND TOGETHER FOR A GOOD CAUSE."

"They may be competitors in the professional arena, but these real estate agents band together for a good cause," says Rod. Their combined effort raises thousands of dollars for local charities each year.

Northcott Disability Services in Dubbo is one of those charities. The not-for-profit organisation is constructing outdoor areas, a playground, paved sitting areas and a sensory garden using \$18,000 raised at Charity Golf Days. "It's nice to see the work you do take shape in the community," Rod says.

Other charities that have received a sizeable donation include the Children's Ward of the Dubbo

Base Hospital, Orana Early Intervention for children with disabilities, The Smith Family, Can Assist which supports cancer patients and their families, and Look Good ... Feel Better – a charity that helps women manage the appearance-related side effects of cancer treatment.

Regional advantage

Since moving to Dubbo in the mid-90s, Rod has noticed that regional agents are extremely effective at raising money for charity. "We're pretty good at this sort of thing," he says. "We all know each other and can pool our knowledge to achieve the best result for the charity."

He also believes that the size of country areas means that agents have more opportunities to connect with their community, which in turn inspires them to become involved in local fundraising activities.

"In the country, charity work is a little more personalised," says Rod. "You're often raising money for local causes, which may be helping someone you know or someone you've done business with."

"When I was working in Western Sydney, I would often sell a property to someone and never see them again. But here in Dubbo, people who ask me to be their real estate agent also attend the same social and sporting events as I do and I often see them when I'm doing the groceries or just out and about in town – and I will most likely keep seeing them for many years to come."

Rod admits that knowing his contributions will directly benefit local organisations motivates his charity work. A project that is close to his heart is the construction of a mobile preschool. The town's current preschool is at capacity, with many children missing out. So Rod applied for government funding from the NSW Government, which is now ensuring all children in Dubbo have access to a preschool education.

"It's really easy getting involved in the community when you can see how your contribution is helping kids, including your own," he says.

The right skills

Real estate agents can also donate their skills to charity, says Rod. "At the end of the day we're sales people and our skills in effective communication, running a business and managing accounts are extremely useful at charity events."

"THE WORK WE DO IN THE COMMUNITY MIGHT CHANGE THIS PERCEPTION OF REAL ESTATE AGENTS AS ONLY BEING INTERESTED IN MAKING A BUCK."

Rod, for example, regularly negotiates sponsorship deals for the Charity Golf Day. He will also approach local businesses to donate items for the charity

auction that follows the REINSW Divisional Novice Auctioneers Competition.

All of the aforementioned events draw large crowds each year thanks to Rod's efforts in encouraging property-related industries such as banks, solicitors, mortgage brokers and accountants to attend.

While his contributions to the Dubbo community are well known, Rod maintains that the work he does for charity is echoed throughout the real estate industry.

"I think it's an offshoot of what we do," he says. "I don't think real estate agents deliberately go out to do charity work, it's just what happens."

"It's just the nature of the job," he adds.

A new image

Unfortunately, it may take some time for a more positive image of real estate agents to permeate public opinion, says Rod.

"The industry continues to be burdened by the classification of being a bit slick," he explains.

But Rod is optimistic that as more agents become involved with charities, a more benevolent figure will replace that of the slick salesman in the minds of the general public.

"The work we do in the community might change this perception of real estate agents as only being interested in making a buck," says Rod. ♦

REAL ESTATE EXCELLENCE CONFERENCE | 2010

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[T1 EVENTS]

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Charles Tarbey,
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Jellis Craig Agency,
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For complete programme please visit the website below.

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Gala Awards



Harbour Cruise



Golf Day



Après SKIPD

REINSW celebrates 100 years

THIS YEAR MARKS 100 YEARS OF REINSW LOOKING AFTER THE INTERESTS OF ITS MEMBERS. IN THIS INSTALMENT OF OUR REINSW RETROSPECTIVE, THE *REAL ESTATE JOURNAL* LOOKS AT THE PROSPEROUS 1950s.

By 1950 REINSW and its members prepared for a period of prosperity.

Land Sales Control had been abolished, and the removal of restrictions had considerably opened up the property market and vastly increased sales turnover.

In this lucrative period, REINSW took the opportunity to lobby the government on issues including

the *Landlord and Tenant Act* and financing for potential home buyers. REINSW wanted to open up the market as completely as it could.

REINSW also underwent major internal changes to account for a growing membership base

that was spreading to the outer suburbs of Sydney.

In the next edition of the Real Estate Journal we look at REINSW from 1960-1969. Please email your stories from the period or article ideas to centenary@reinsw.com.au.

100 years

The fifth decade 1950 to 1959

1950

- Wolf Marx of Ludmar Pty Ltd suggests REINSW form a property exchange.
- William Petit, REINSW original Secretary, dies.

1951

- Harry Amadio becomes REINSW President.

1952

- REINSW prepares a detailed set of objections to the *Landlord and Tenant Act* for presentation to the Minister of Justice.

Fund for fighting injustice

A CAMPAIGN TO CHANGE WHAT THE REINSW SAW AS UNJUST CLAUSES IN THE *LANDLORD AND TENANT ACT* GAINED MOMENTUM IN THE 1950s.

The Real Estate Institute's 'Fighting Fund for the Remedy of Injustices in the *Landlord and Tenant Act*' was inaugurated in the 1950s. Within two months, nearly all city and suburban members of REINSW were claimed as supporters and funds were flowing in. REINSW President at the time, Harry Amadio, hoped the campaign would abolish "the most iniquitous piece of legislation on the Statute Book".



The campaign would attempt to enlist the support of tenants by impressing them with the reasonable nature of owners' claims for increased rents. Later, as the campaign progressed, attention would be focused on rental returns for landlords.

By 1952 the campaign had achieved some of its objectives. The Landlord and Tenant Committee of REINSW prepared a detailed set of objections to the Act for presentation to the Minister of Justice. However, the parliamentary session closed with no alteration to the Act.

With the resignation of Harry Amadio as REINSW President and the loss of the right political opportunity, the campaign to change the *Landlord and Tenant Act* quietly folded.

Home finance the key

REINSW DIRECTED ITS EFFORTS TO INCREASING MEMBER SALES BY LOBBYING FOR INCREASED FINANCE FOR HOME OWNERSHIP.

"Finance is the key that will undo the lock on the hope chest. Without money, existing accommodation cannot be redistributed, nor can new houses be built," wrote REINSW President Bill Duncan.

From the Newcastle District Estate Agents' Association came a call to gather delegates of all State Institutes to present a case to Federal Government and political parties for more home finance. As a result of a meeting between Newcastle representatives and members of the REINSW Board, a policy on housing finance was drawn up.

The policy stated the government should assist housing by: restricting housing finance solely to those unable to acquire their own homes; channelling funds for housing through selected bodies such as the cooperative building societies and

the Commonwealth Bank; that no discrimination be made between old and new homes for loan purposes; and a greater proportion of the value of the dwelling be advanced by the Commonwealth Bank.

REINSW argued that freer finance for existing homes rather than just new ones would help older people move out of their large houses into smaller more suitable houses, thus enabling new families to move into the older larger dwellings.

Lyle Moore presented the case for increased home finance to the Prime Minister. Menzies promised he would "certainly be keeping in mind the views of your Institute".

When the new Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement was drawn up, the effect of REINSW's lobbying efforts was obvious. Funds for cooperative building societies were considerably increased, specifically to encourage home ownership.

1953

- A motion is presented at the REINSW Annual General Meeting to change the Institute's Constitution.

1954

- Lyle Moore gains Imperial honour of Commander of the British Empire.

1955

- Hotels in New South Wales no longer have to close at 6pm, ending the 'six o'clock swill'.

1958

- ANZAC Day Act 1958 receives Royal Assent, making ANZAC Day a national public holiday in Australia.

1959

- Formal construction of the Sydney Opera House began.

Presidents

T Turner
1950

H Amadio
1951-1952

W Duncan
1953-1954

WG Thomas
1955-1956

SB Dawson
1957-1959

Ahead of its time?

REINSW TRIED TO STREAMLINE SALES TECHNIQUES FOR HOME PURCHASE AMONG ITS MEMBERS THROUGH A MULTIPLE LISTING SYSTEM.

REINSW formed the Multiple Listing Bureau (MLB) in 1956, with a zone embracing Liverpool, Granville, Parramatta, Eastwood, Epping, through to Hornsby. This area was chosen because it was where the greatest real estate activity was occurring and where the bulk of MLB supporters worked.

Under a multiple listing system, individual agents placed properties they managed into a central register, which then supplied data about the property to other member agents who had the right to sell the property if they could. If another agent was successful in selling the property, commission was shared between them and the original listing agent according to a prearranged formula.

Multiple listing took a long time to overcome conservatism in selling techniques of many members that REINSW had not yet broken down.

Time for change

THE 1950s WAS A PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANT INTERNAL CHANGE FOR REINSW.

By the 1950s the need to change REINSW was evident. Nearly all Presidents had been city agents, but the bulk of members worked in the suburbs. The need to represent the interests of suburban and regional agents was recognised, as was the reality that this need could not be met under the existing constitution.

At the 1953 Annual General Meeting, WG Thomas and HA Gorman presented a motion that "the revision of the constitution is necessary for the peculiar purpose of extending representation to give local associations tangible connection under charter with the Institute so that we can extend our field of influence". The motion was carried and a sub-committee established to put the matter into motion.

Reorganisation on a branch basis was accepted as the only way to proceed.

Join the Waratah Network

IF YOU HAVE BEEN WORKING IN THE INDUSTRY FOR MORE THAN 20 YEARS, REINSW BELIEVES YOU DESERVE RECOGNITION. THE WARATAH NETWORK ACKNOWLEDGES AND CELEBRATES THE EXPERIENCE OF OUR INDUSTRY'S LONG-TERM MEMBERS.

Membership to the Waratah Network is free. To be eligible to join, you must be a current REINSW member and you need to attest that you have been working in the real estate industry for 20 years or more. Two REINSW members will then have to verify your experience.

As a member of the Waratah Network, you will:

- receive a certificate and special memento to celebrate your contribution to our industry

- have your name listed on the REINSW website acknowledging your membership of the Waratah Network
- be invited to attend half-yearly networking events, where you can rub shoulders with 'the good and the great' of our industry
- have the opportunity to take part in the Young Agents Mentoring Program and use your vast experience to aid the development of some of our industry's best and brightest.

To apply for membership to the Waratah Network, simply go to www.reinsw.com.au and find The Waratah Network under Member Centre. Then download the application form, fill it in and return to REINSW.

If you have photos of members, details or memories of events – or information about interesting REINSW happenings or milestones – we'd love to hear from you. Email centenary@reinsw.com.au

Five tips for better photographs



BY MARCUS ENNO



MAKE A STRONG FIRST IMPRESSION ON POTENTIAL BUYERS BY FOLLOWING THESE TIPS WHEN PHOTOGRAPHING PROPERTIES.

Taking well composed and exposed photos of properties is a core part of any real estate business. It can persuade a potential buyer to view a property and attract passers-by to your window display.

Using the following tried and true techniques, you can produce near-professional looking images without the need to buy expensive equipment.

1. Compose the image

While image composition can be a complicated science, here are a few basic tricks:

- Before taking a photograph, move distracting items from the scene such as a car in the driveway, a garbage sign or a 'For sale' sign. For interior shots,

TAKE YOUR CAMERA EVERY TIME YOU VISIT A PROPERTY. THE END RESULT CAN BE VERY DIFFERENT DEPENDING ON THE TIME OF DAY A PHOTO IS TAKEN.

tidy up the room so it looks uncluttered.

- Highlight the best areas of a property.
- Take shots from different angles so nothing obstructs an important part of the scene.
- Review the scene to ensure the vertical lines are perpendicular.
- Move slightly to the left or right, or back a few steps, before taking a photo. This method can significantly improve composition.

A tripod provides the steadiness necessary for longer exposures and also makes composing images much easier as you can have a long, controlled look at the scene.

2. Invest in the right hardware

Digital SLRs and compact cameras that allow manual settings are ideal for real estate photography. They offer features and flexibility that a standard point-and-shoot camera can't. They also have many different lenses and accessories to choose from, many of which are ideal for photographing properties.

For example, a 17mm wide-angle lens can capture more of a scene than is possible with a standard lens. A wide-angle lens also allows you to stand closer to the subject and still fit it in the frame. This means you can ensure unwanted foreground objects, such as mailboxes, don't interfere with the focal point.

3. Control the lighting

Take your camera every time you visit a property. The end result can be very different depending on the time of day a photo is taken. For example, shooting at dusk and early in the morning will create a more dramatic, vibrant image.

- Exterior shots: Try to shoot on a day when the sky is blue and contains clouds. Shoot when a cloud covers the sun so the light is diffused, and dark shadows are barely noticeable. Even bright, overcast days can provide good lighting for exterior shots of properties.
- Interior shots: Shoot the interior on a bright but overcast day. This prevents streams of stark sunlight from entering the room. For the best illumination inside, combine artificial and natural light. Let natural light from outside enter the room to augment artificial light.



BEFORE



AFTER

BEFORE: DARK SHADOWS; OVEREXPOSED SKY.
 AFTER: A FILL FLASH BALANCES AMBIENT LIGHT AND LIGHTENS SHADOWED AREAS; SATURATION LEVELS ARE MODIFIED TO ENHANCE THE COLOUR OF THE SKY AND FOLIAGE.



BEFORE



AFTER

BEFORE: CONFINED SPACE LIMITS HOW MUCH OF THE ROOM CAN BE PHOTOGRAPHED; OUTDOOR AREA IS OVEREXPOSED.
 AFTER: A WIDE LENS CAPTURES MORE OF THE SPACE; COLOUR CORRECTION GIVES DEFINITION TO ITEMS IN THE OUTDOOR AREA.

If you are getting serious, consider buying an external flash. It will bounce light off the ceiling and provide 'fill flash' – a photographic technique used to brighten deep shadow areas.

An external flash can also ensure you minimise reflection in glass.

4. Use photo-editing software
 Programs like Adobe Photoshop open a world of creative possibilities. A short course will help you get the most out of the software. But even agents with a very basic understanding of the program can master the following:

- Use the crop tool to remove distracting elements or shift the focal point of an image.
- Adjust the brightness of a photo to make it more vibrant. This tool is particularly useful for real estate agents who don't have time to wait for ideal weather

- conditions to take photos of a property.
- Modify saturation levels to enhance the impact of the colours in your photograph. For example, you can make the sky a deeper blue or trees a lush green. ▶



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 Gai Williams, Managing Director

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- TRA can audit trail all searches in the event of misuse and trace back to the computer used, therefore protecting both principals and property managers.
- TRA has a 60 page document on every aspect of our business showing compliance to the new privacy principles, completed by our barrister and solicitors.
- TRA abides by "Property, Stock and Business Agents Amendments (Tenant Databases) Regulation 2004".

BEFORE: DISTRACTING ITEMS ON BENCHES; FOCAL POINT IS THE CORNER OF THE KITCHEN; ARTIFICIAL LIGHT GIVES IMAGE YELLOW TINT.



AFTER: CLUTTER CLEARED FROM BENCHES; COMPOSITION HIGHLIGHTS BEST PART OF THE SPACE (OPEN PLAN LIVING); COLOUR CORRECTION BRIGHTENS COLOURS.



• Use the shadow highlights tool to brighten shadowed areas and darken highlighted areas. For example, an interior shot may have a harsh stream of sunlight coming through a window.

With this tool you can soften the light rays and lift dark tones in the background. Warning: this tool should be used with care.

5. Enlist the experts

While these tips will lift the quality of your photos, a professional photographer has the equipment and knowledge to capture a property in the best possible light – literally.

They will have:

- The experience and creative vision to know what gives a photograph impact.

• A variety of lenses to suit different types of spaces.

• Advanced skills in Adobe Photoshop to professionally enhance your photos.

• A professional lighting system with multiple lights for different applications.

No one expects real estate agents to be expert photographers. Using

the services of a professional often saves time and resources, making it money well spent.

Marcus Enno is a professional photographer for Studio Commercial. For more information on how professional photography can benefit your real estate business call (02) 9267 8038, email photography@studiocommercial.com or visit www.studiocommercial.com. ♦

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Keep learning



News

Strata Management Conference a success

On 26 May 2010, strata managers from across NSW attended the REINSW Strata Management Conference held in Sydney. Speakers included solicitor Colin Grace who shared his insights and predictions for 2010. Strata law solicitor Ian McKnight then explained the legal responsibilities associated with the repair and maintenance of a property.

Attracting 120 delegates, the event has been deemed a great success. Feedback from REINSW members following the Strata Management Conference revealed a genuine interest in strata courses. In response, REINSW is offering a Strata Bridging Course (Licensing) in July. Refer to page 24 for more details.

New courses

As a result of REINSW's strategic partnership with the Property Council of Australia, we will soon be able to offer members the following courses:

- General CPD courses
- Property as an Investment
- Private Equity
- Valuation of Direct Property
- Advanced Valuation of Direct Property
- Valuation of Direct Property Bundle
- Overview of the Property Development Industry
- Acquisitions

REINSW is also developing courses on small business management, mortgage broking and facilities management.

Trading water: new accreditation scheme



BY SUSAN HULL
REINSW EDUCATION & TRAINING
MANAGER

REINSW has formed a partnership with the National Stock Exchange (NSX) to develop an accreditation course for trading water.

Until now there have not been any clear guidelines for water brokers. As a result, the NSX noted some practices by brokers as being inadequate and possibly detrimental to clients, agents and traders as well as related legal and insurance industries. The need for an accreditation scheme to lift the professionalism of water trading was clear. To that end, the NSX sought the support of REINSW in the development, trial and national delivery of a national accreditation course.

A formal undertaking by both parties was entered into, with a view to jointly offer the program. Drafted by Ag Concepts (an independent, specialist agricultural advisory service), the National Water Trading Intermediary Accreditation Scheme is now being offered to REINSW members. The course, which is the only one of its kind in Australia, aims to create a benchmark for water trading practices. It will cover:



- Property rights in the water market
- The role of a water broker
- Water markets in the Murray Darling Basin
- Water licensing and allocation
- Current and anticipated regulation
- The role of temporary water trades
- Broking practice and agency conduct
- Legislative limitations on agency practice
- Consumer protection
- Trust accounting basics

THE NEED FOR AN ACCREDITATION SCHEME TO LIFT THE PROFESSIONALISM OF WATER TRADING WAS CLEAR.

- Ethical and conduct standards
- Risk and risk management strategies
- Advice in water broking
- Continuing education and training
- Trading permanent water.

REINSW Training Calendar

JULY/AUGUST 2010

JULY

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
<p>WANT TO KNOW MORE?</p> <p>You can find out more about all of our courses by going to www.reinsw.com.au – simply click on Course Schedule in the Training menu.</p>			1	2	3	4
			<p>SYDNEY Real Estate Licensing Course (full time) - Week 4 Residential Property Management - 5 days</p>		<p>SYDNEY Course in Property Practice (part time) continues (9.00am-5.00pm)</p>	
5	<p>CANBERRA CPD Prepare for selling like never before (9.00am-4.00pm)</p>	6	7	8	9	10
<p>SYDNEY Real Estate Licensing Course (full time) – Week 5 Agency Administration and Recruitment – 5 days</p>					<p>SYDNEY Course in Property Practice (part time) continues (9.00am-5.00pm)</p>	
<p>SYDNEY Course in Property Practice (full time) – 4 days (9.00am-5.00pm)</p>						
<p>SYDNEY CPD An agents guide to tax and property investment (9.30am-1.30pm)</p>		<p>SYDNEY Real Estate Licensing Course (part time) continues</p>				
<p>SYDNEY Course in Property Practice (part time) Session 7 (5.30pm-8.30pm)</p>		<p>SYDNEY Course in Property Practice (part time) Session 8 (5.30pm-8.30pm)</p>				
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
<p>SYDNEY Real Estate Licensing Course (full time) – Week 6 (optional) Auctioneers Accreditation – 3 days</p>			<p>PENRITH CPD Prepare for selling like never before (9.00am-1.00pm)</p>		<p>SYDNEY Course in Property Practice (part time) concludes (9.00am-5.00pm)</p>	
<p>SYDNEY Strata Management Course in Property Practice (full time) – 3 days (9.00am-5.00pm)</p>				<p>MANLY Young Agents Open for Inspection (4.00pm-6.00pm)</p>		
<p>SYDNEY CPD Mastering Retail Leases (9.30am-1.30pm)</p>		<p>SYDNEY Real Estate Licensing Course (part time) continues</p>				
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
<p>SYDNEY Course in Property Practice (full time) – 4 days (9.00am-5.00pm)</p>				<p>ARMIDALE CPD Rural Real Estate (9.00am-1.00pm)</p>		
<p>SYDNEY CPD Prepare for selling like never before (9.30am-1.30pm or 5.00pm-9.00pm)</p>		<p>SYDNEY Real Estate Licensing Course (part time) continues</p>				
<p>PORT MACQUARIE CPD Creating impact and influence (9.00am-1.00pm)</p>		<p>TAMWORTH CPD Rural Real Estate (9.00am-1.00pm)</p>				
26	27	28	29	30	31	
<p>CANBERRA CPD Prepare for selling like never before (9.00am-4.00pm)</p>		<p>SYDNEY Real Estate Licensing Course (part time) continues</p>		<p>GRIFFITH CPD The Lease and the Law (9.00am-1.00pm)</p>		
<p>SYDNEY Strata Bridging Course (Licensing) – 4 days</p>						
<p>ALBURY CPD The Lease and the Law (9.00am-1.00pm)</p>		<p>WAGGA WAGGA CPD The Lease and the Law (9.00am-1.00pm)</p>		<p>SYDNEY Participating in an Owners Corporation (5.00pm-7.00pm)</p>		
<p>SYDNEY CPD Creating impact and influence (9.30am-1.30pm or 5.00pm-9.00pm)</p>		<p>RIVERINA DIVISION Novice Auctioneers Competition</p>				

CPD workshops – go to www.reinsw.com.au for course descriptions and prices

Course in Property Practice (full and part time as indicated)
Price includes REINSW Student Membership

Licensing Course (full and part time as indicated), flexible enrolment options available

Forums and Divisional meetings

Consumer course

Novice Auctioneers Competition

AUGUST

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
SYDNEY Course in Property Practice (full time) – 4 days (9.00am-5.00pm)						
	SYDNEY CPD Prepare for selling like never before (9.30am-1.30pm)	SYDNEY Real Estate Licensing Course (part time) continues	SYDNEY Property Management Forum (3.00pm-5.00pm)			
		ECHUCA CPD Creating impact and influence (9.00am-1.00pm)				
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
CANBERRA Course in Property Practice (full time) – 5 days (9.00am-5.00pm)						
	WOLLONGONG CPD An agent's guide to tax and property investment (9.00am-1.00pm)	SYDNEY Breakfast Club (7.30am-9.30am)				
	SYDNEY CPD Make your look your hook (9.30am-1.30pm)	SYDNEY Real Estate Licensing Course (part time) continues				
		CENTRAL COAST DIVISION Novice Auctioneers Competition				
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
SYDNEY Course in Property Practice (full time) – 4 days (9.00am-5.00pm)						
		SYDNEY Real Estate Licensing Course (part time) continues				
						
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
	SYDNEY CPD Communicating across cultures (9.30am-1.30pm)	SYDNEY Real Estate Licensing Course (part time) continues	ORANGE CPD Rural Real Estate (9.00am-1.00pm)			
			NORTHERN BEACHES DIVISION Novice Auctioneers Competition			
30	31	SEPT 1	2			
SYDNEY Course in Property Practice (full time) – 4 days (9.00am-5.00pm)						
	SYDNEY CPD An agent's guide to tax and property investment (9.30am-1.30pm)	SYDNEY Real Estate Licensing Course (part time) continues				

RURAL REAL ESTATE: MAKING IT WORK FOR YOU

This course will examine the contemporary challenges facing rural agents including the animal welfare and OH&S issues associated with preparing livestock for sale at saleyards. It will provide information on the National Livestock Identification System (NLIS), National Vendor Declarations (NVD) and other relevant legislation.

Tamworth 21 July 2010 **Orange** 26 August 2010
Armidale 23 July 2010

Cost \$199 REINSW members / \$245 Non-members

MASTERING RETAIL LEASES

This course will explain the intricacies, legal requirements, and potential pitfalls of retail leases. Ensure that you are a reliable source of information and advice for your landlords and tenants, increasing your business and therefore your market share.

Sydney 13 July 2010

Cost \$199 REINSW members / \$245 Non-members

AN AGENT'S GUIDE TO TAX AND PROPERTY INVESTMENT

Add greater value to your client relationships by being able to explain the tax implications of investing in property, and the relevant tax laws associated with appraising and listing property for sale or rental.

Sydney 6 July 2010
Wollongong 10 August 2010
Sydney 31 August

Cost \$199 REINSW members / \$245 Non-members

PARTICIPATING IN AN OWNERS CORPORATION

This course provides important information for any agent wishing to enter the strata management sector. Consumers will also benefit from learning the rights and responsibilities of both managing agents and Owners Corporations.

Sydney 29 July 2010

Cost \$65

BREAKFAST CLUB – TOP 10% AGENCY PRACTICE

Take the guesswork out of business growth by implementing best practice. Industry expert **Robert Bevan** will reveal the systems and policies being used by the top 10% of agencies to achieve outstanding levels of profitability, and improve market share and turnover.

Sydney 11 August 2010

Cost ONE BREAKFAST CLUB EVENT \$65 REINSW members / \$90 Non-members. FOUR BREAKFAST CLUB EVENTS \$208 REINSW members / \$288 Non-members

MAKE YOUR LOOK YOUR HOOK

A first impression can mean the difference between winning or losing big sales, big jobs, big clients and big opportunities. This course is about adding polish, presence and substance to outclass your competition. Stand out from the crowd and be unforgettable!

Sydney 10 August 2010

Cost \$199 REINSW members / \$245 Non-members

COMMUNICATING ACROSS CULTURES

Learn how to understand different body language, customer service expectations and what is considered polite behaviour. This course provides useful tips for resolving conflict and negotiating for those who deal with clients from different cultural backgrounds.

Sydney 24 August 2010

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Still actively involved in sales and auctions, Bob's ongoing practical experience means he understands the issues facing real estate agents out in the field. He has also been the proprietor of a small business for several years and, consequently, his students benefit from insights on the real estate industry from the point of view of a Principal.

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What's in a warehouse?



BY LESLEY PARKER

UNDERSTANDING HOW A WAREHOUSE WILL BE USED CAN HELP REAL ESTATE AGENTS SELL OR LEASE THIS TYPE OF PROPERTY MORE EFFECTIVELY.

Twenty or more years ago a warehouse was a pretty simple set-up: a big building with a high truss, in an industrial area, where packages were stacked rack upon rack. Today, however, businesses and their advisers are thinking outside the box.

"You can actually do a Masters in logistics – the process of how you move things in and out in the most effective way," says CB Richard Ellis Regional Director Joshua Charles, illustrating how much thought can go into choosing the right property these days.

"Being a good agent is not just about picking up the phone and reciting the truss height," says Charles, who heads the firm's industrial and logistics divisions across Australia and New Zealand. "It's about understanding use."

Charles is based in Sydney, where issues such as road congestion affect warehousing decisions. The issues are a bit different in

Dubbo, where Andrew McDonald, of Andrew McDonald Commercial, services clients requiring a regional hub for goods that may go north to Queensland, south to Victoria or west into the far reaches of NSW – literally to the 'back o' Bourke'.

At the junction of three highways – the Mitchell, the Newell and the Golden – Dubbo is in a strategic position for road freight. That means warehouses must be able to cope with the long wheelbase of a road train pulling two or more trailers.

"It's not just about the warehouse," McDonald says. "The external spaces are just as important."

Asked about the warehousing needs of different industries in their markets, Charles and McDonald say every business operation is different and will have its own specific requirements but there are some key things agents should discover about any business that comes looking for storage space.

Apart from the straightforward question of how much internal space and height a business needs, the nature of the product is crucial information.

APART FROM THE STRAIGHTFORWARD QUESTION OF HOW MUCH INTERNAL SPACE AND HEIGHT A BUSINESS NEEDS, THE NATURE OF THE PRODUCT IS CRUCIAL.

If the business deals in perishable goods it will want to store those goods close to market or to the point of export.

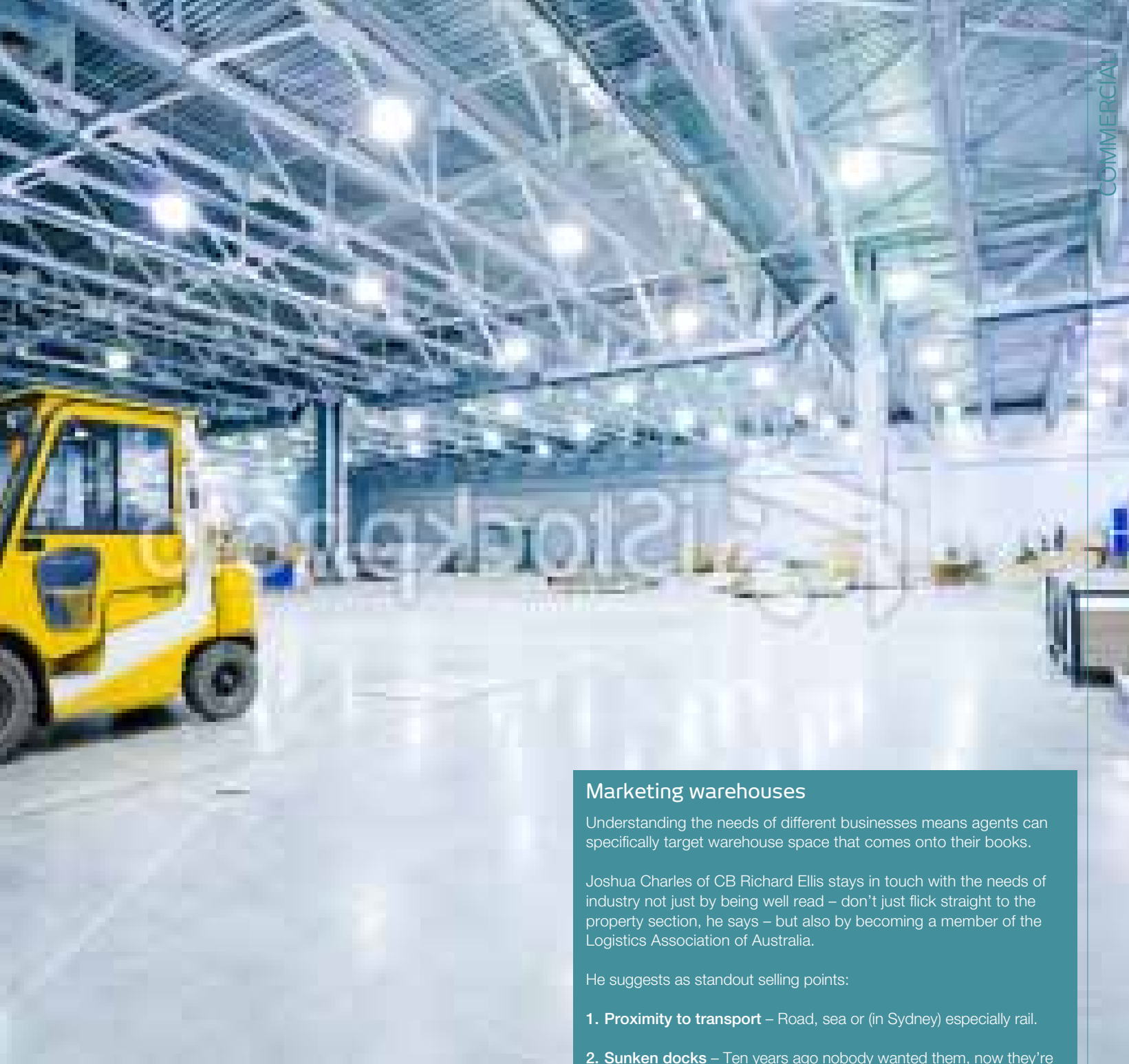
Export flowers can be frozen but for only so long, Charles says by way of example. "You can't afford to have them sitting on the back of a ship for weeks." That means proximity to an airport is likely to be important to such a client.

Perishable goods will require a temperature-controlled space, whether cooled, chilled or frozen. In the case of products such as flowers, humidity control may also be a requirement.



Security will be an issue for high value or high risk goods such as computer equipment.

"Someone like Apple or Dell operates in a very high security industry," Charles says. That sort of client will want full concrete walls rather than dado construction – where the wall is concrete to about 180cm and then iron the rest of the way. Apart from deterring theft, it's not as easy to poke a forklift through a full concrete wall, McDonald says. And they provide better insulation from the heat.



"IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT THE WAREHOUSE ... THE EXTERNAL SPACES ARE JUST AS IMPORTANT."

Warehousing can be energy-intensive – think businesses requiring a lot of lighting or computerisation. Charles predicts demand for energy-efficient premises will grow as larger corporate tenants, in particular, become more socially conscious of the impact of their warehousing.

"People will need to start getting their heads around that in the next six to 12 months," he says. "Tenants' awareness of the green rating of buildings is growing."

It's also a question of cost efficiency. Think of the potential savings if you can have the lights off at least some of the time in a 20,000 square metre space where there's a light every 10 square metres.

In Dubbo, McDonald says the special requirements of storing hazardous materials are coming to the fore. ►

Marketing warehouses

Understanding the needs of different businesses means agents can specifically target warehouse space that comes onto their books.

Joshua Charles of CB Richard Ellis stays in touch with the needs of industry not just by being well read – don't just flick straight to the property section, he says – but also by becoming a member of the Logistics Association of Australia.

He suggests as standout selling points:

- 1. Proximity to transport** – Road, sea or (in Sydney) especially rail.
- 2. Sunken docks** – Ten years ago nobody wanted them, now they're a must-have because the quicker you turn a truck around the less it will cost you.
- 3. Office space** – A warehouse/HQ might need as much as a third of the floor space devoted to offices; someone else might need no more than a small room for a few workers.
- 4. Internal height** – not enough height and you're in trouble, but nor do people want to pay for height they won't use.
- 5. Hard stand** – Concreted, external areas are half the rent of internal space and containers can be cost-efficiently stored three or four high.
- 6. Power** – Manufacturers and business using refrigeration like a high power rating (Kilo Volt Amperes or kVA).
- 7. Outgoings** – Costs such as land taxes can vary considerably depending on location, with a dramatic effect on the overall rental cost.

"The occupational health and safety requirements become an issue," he says of the storage needs of this sort of business. That might mean a client has special requirements for the placement of the warehouse on the overall site, or they may insist on sealed outdoor areas to minimise dust, as well as needing efficient run-off into drains to meet their legal obligations.

A regional hub like Dubbo has the advantage of cost efficiency when it comes to the storage of bulky goods that take up a lot of acreage. Inevitably, rents in Dubbo are much cheaper than in Sydney.

McDonald says someone like a furniture retailer could pay \$50 to \$60 per square metre for offsite storage in Dubbo. In Sydney, you'd be stacking the furniture outside at that price.

These specific needs aside, Charles says Sydney warehousing faces a big change in coming years as the State Government seeks to reduce congestion and damage to roads caused by the movement of container trucks.

"THE GOVERNMENT IS WAKING UP TO THE FACT THAT WE NEED TO START SHIFTING MANY OF THESE CONTAINERS BY RAIL RATHER THAN ROAD. OUR ROAD SYSTEM SIMPLY WON'T COPE."

"The government is waking up to the fact that we need to start shifting many of these containers by rail rather than road," he says. "Our road system simply won't cope."

The idea is that containers will come off ships at Port Botany straight onto the back of a train and taken to an inland port such as Sydney Ports' Intermodal Logistics Centre at Enfield in Sydney's western suburbs, which is now in development.

As such inland port sites are identified for development, warehousing operations will move to be nearby. ♦



More information

Industry associations can be a useful source of information.

Logistics Association of Australia
www.laa.asn.au

Bulky Goods Retailers Association
www.bulkygoodsretailers.com.au

Plastics and Chemicals Industries Association
www.pacia.org.au

Australian Food and Grocery Council
www.afgc.org.au

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A CORONER'S REPORT ON POOL SAFETY HAS REAL ESTATE AGENTS WONDERING WHETHER THEY COULD BE HELD LIABLE FOR A DROWNING IN A HOME SWIMMING POOL.

NSW Deputy State Coroner Paul MacMahon has recommended a new criminal charge of negligent death linked to home swimming pools following an inquest into the deaths of eight toddlers. In five of the cases there was failed, non-complying or no fencing. In the remaining three cases, gates were propped open.

It would "emphasise the importance to the community in general of taking matters such as the maintenance of pool fencing and gates seriously," he states in his Coroner's report.

Rachel Aquilina, Franchisee Regional Manager for PoolWerx, agrees that pool safety laws need reform.

"New South Wales falls behind both Western Australia and Queensland in upholding stringent laws on pool safety and fencing," she explains.

According to Ms Aquilina, the State Government needs to introduce new legislation, including certification requirements on pool fencing and safety, to be in place at the sale of a property and the beginning of every tenancy lease.

Children in rental properties are at greater risk due to a lack of focus on pool compliance during property inspections, says Mr MacMahon. While he refers to one managing agent as having performed a property inspection and paid little attention to



the pool in which a toddler later died, he adds that "it would be unlikely that [the agent] would have been qualified to make such an assessment" due to lack of training.

He concludes that responsibility to ensure that pool barrier fencing and gates are compliant lies with the owner.

"I think the impact on owners is clear – they are identified as having the responsibility for pool safety on rental properties and as such could be subject to criminal proceedings if the recommendations are implemented," says Ms Aquilina.

"This has huge implications for owners who may feel they 'defer' their obligations when they employ the services of an agent to manage a rental property." ♦

"THE IMPACT ON OWNERS IS CLEAR – THEY ARE IDENTIFIED AS HAVING THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR POOL SAFETY ON RENTAL PROPERTIES AND AS SUCH COULD BE SUBJECT TO CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS."

How agents can promote pool safety

Rachel Aquilina from PoolWerx recommends agents inform owners of this report and its implications.

She also advises agents to:

- complete a full inspection of the pool and its level of health and safety
- ensure that any outstanding issues are addressed immediately
- notify the tenant that any issues or concerns they have about the pool need to be identified to the managing agent for immediate action
- agree with the landlord that any issues concerning pool safety can be dealt with, without prior approval of costing (up to a maximum spend of \$500, for example), including a temporary solution if a permanent one is above the agreed limit
- include pool safety and CPR information in a tenant 'welcome pack' that highlights the need for supervision, fencing and gate essentials, and the increased danger when moving to a new property with a pool.
- advise tenants of what they should be aware of in terms of pool safety so they know what to notify the agent about.

For more information download home pool safety checklist www.homepoolsafety.com.au

Clearing sales: are agents responsible for an OH&S breach?



BY PETER LONG

REAL ESTATE AGENTS CONDUCTING CLEARING SALES, PARTICULARLY IN RURAL AREAS, NEED TO BE AWARE OF THE IMPLICATIONS OF OH&S LEGISLATION SHOULD THERE BE AN INCIDENT ON THE AUCTION SITE.

There are no reported court decisions in NSW finding an agent guilty of an OH&S breach from a clearing sale. But one need only look at the facts of a prosecution by WorkCover of the NSW Police Service to see just how exposed each agent is.

In that case, officers were using a handheld speed-recording device on the side of the road when one of them stepped onto the road signalling the driver of a vehicle exceeding the speed limit to stop. The vehicle proceeded towards the officer, increasing its speed as it did so. The officer tried to avoid the vehicle but it swerved towards him and ran into him.

The vehicle did not stop but police later apprehended the driver, who had an extensive criminal history including numerous serious traffic offences. The vehicle was unregistered and uninsured, and the driver was a disqualified driver under the influence of alcohol.

Despite the circumstances, the NSW Police Service (being the employer of the injured police officer) was found guilty of having failed to ensure the health, safety

AGENTS CAN FACE EITHER A CIVIL SUIT FOR DAMAGES IF SOMEONE IS INJURED, OR A PROSECUTION UNDER THE *OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY ACT 2000* (NSW) IN RELATION TO ITEMS SOLD.

and welfare at work of its employees and was fined \$150,000.

The connection to real estate

It is important for rural-based real estate agents to minimise the risks they face at clearing sales. Agents can face either a civil suit for damages if someone is injured, or a prosecution under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000* (NSW) in relation to items sold.

The civil law is less severe than OH&S legislation and it is submitted that if agents can take the necessary steps to reduce their risk of an OH&S prosecution, they will be simultaneously reducing their risk under the civil law.

The parts of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000* (NSW) that are of most concern to agents involved in clearing sales are:



- Section 9: that a self-employed person must ensure that people are not exposed to risks to their health or safety arising from the conduct of the person's undertaking while they are at the person's place of work.
- Section 10: that a person who has control over any machinery or substances in non-domestic premises and which have been provided for the use of, or operation by, people at work, must also ensure that the plant or substance is safe and without risk.

What can an agent be liable for?

The aforementioned obligations will cover agricultural machinery and similar items with unguarded moving parts and other harmful components. An agent can therefore be liable for breach

ALL DOCUMENTS, ACTIONS AND SPOKEN WORD MUST REPEATEDLY CONFIRM THAT IT IS THE VENDOR PRINCIPAL WHO HAS ABSOLUTE CONTROL.

of the Act if they sell a standard head for a harvester that has been through three previous owners, each of whom has removed some nuisance guard or modified a part of the manufacturer's safety design.

Some agents place stickers on items with short warnings about them not to be used without a roll bar or a guard. However, by doing this the agent is taking some



responsibility should an incident occur. Consequently, if the agent warns of one risk but fails to warn of another that exists in the same item, they may be seen to have assumed the necessary degree of control and be found liable for the risks they did not warn of.

This raises the question: how can an agent hope to remain in the business of conducting clearing sales if the only way to avoid liability is to 'induct' every potential purchaser as to the health and safety aspects of every item?

It appears far more preferable for the agent to simply be the agent of the principal vendor and to leave all (or as much as possible) of the control in the hands of the vendor principal. While agents must take on that role adopted by other professionals of giving advice and

IT IS ADVISABLE ... TO GIVE SHORT VERBAL WARNINGS THROUGHOUT THE AUCTION SO AN INDIVIDUAL CANNOT LATER ALLEGE THAT PROPER WARNINGS WERE NOT GIVEN.

recommendations to their clients, they must also take instruction and direction from those same clients at all times.

Don't take responsibility

All documents, actions and spoken word must repeatedly confirm that it is the vendor principal who has absolute control, not the agent.

In the retainer agreement with the principal, an agent should put down in writing the specific limited control he or she has over the premises where the clearing sale is to be conducted, and the plant and items being put up for sale. Ensure express conditions of the retainer agreement give the principal vendor responsibility for:

- the state of each article
- the placement of articles on site and their position in relation to nearby articles
- the access to and egress from the site and between articles
- the collection and loading of purchased articles.

REINSW standard agency agreements have been amended to reflect these recommendations.

Avoiding an incident

On the day of a clearing sale, it is recommended that the agent put up A4 size documents with words of warning at the registration tent, entry points, toilets and on larger items being offered for sale. The precise wording can be drafted for the agent by a lawyer experienced in this area.

Agents should also read out the written warning to all attendees at the start of the auction. It is also advisable for the agent to continue to give short verbal warnings throughout the auction so an individual cannot later allege that proper warnings were not given.

Peter Long is the Practice Group Leader with Slater & Gordon in Gunnedah NSW. He is accredited as a Specialist in Personal Injury Law by the New South Wales Law Society. ♦

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Raising the bar

REINSW MEMBER COLIN ROOKE IS DEDICATED TO LIFTING PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR REAL ESTATE AGENTS. HE WAS RECENTLY RECOGNISED FOR HIS CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDUSTRY AT THE 2010 REIA AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE.

For more than 40 years, Colin Rooke from Dyson Austen has generously served the real estate profession. He has lobbied tirelessly to protect agent interests, and volunteered his expertise to REINSW members and the wider community. Not surprisingly, he has received numerous accolades for these contributions.

Most recently, Colin was awarded the prestigious President's Award at the 2010 REIA Awards for Excellence. He is quick to deflect attention from himself, commenting instead on the responsibility of industry veterans, like himself, to nurture young professionals.

"I believe that along with an award comes an obligation to reinvest in the profession – don't just put it up on the wall," says Colin. The 63 year old urges established real estate agents to share their knowledge and

"I BELIEVE THAT ALONG WITH AN AWARD COMES AN OBLIGATION TO REINVEST IN THE PROFESSION."

experience. "Your expertise may be of substantial benefit to another practitioner," he adds.

Forward thinking

Colin is doing his bit to encourage the exchange of ideas by establishing a real estate 'think tank'. He aims to bring a wide variety of property experts together to provide considered thoughts on topics such as the establishment of a real estate futures market; private investment in public housing; and the role of self-managed super funds in making housing more affordable through equity sharing.

As Chair of REINSW Valuers Chapter, Colin also hosts forums on issues that valuers face on a daily basis. These forums allow members to network and learn from each other.



When it comes to his own professional development, Colin admits his property-related library of more 1000 publications is an excellent resource. He offers the collection of journals, historical textbooks and court reports to all REINSW members. But he has an agenda – albeit a selfless one.

"I would be pleased to share this resource with any REINSW member. I believe access to information and endorsed

best practice standards is vital for real estate agents as our society becomes more litigiously conscious," he says.

Need for professionalism

In recent years, Colin has observed a global decline in professionalism – by business and the wider community. And, he says, real estate is not immune.

"Everyone openly demands a certain level of professionalism –

"ACCESS TO ... ENDORSED BEST PRACTICE STANDARDS IS VITAL FOR REAL ESTATE AGENTS."

but at the end of the day they seem happy to compromise on service and quality for the lowest quote," says Colin. "I believe the community is becoming increasingly vulnerable because of the emphasis on finding the cheapest option – and agents suffer under greater pressure to deliver an unreasonably low cost with maximum consumer benefit while maintaining highly professional service."

To combat this trend, Colin has lobbied extensively to ensure the real estate profession is well trained and well regulated. His most recent contribution to legislative reform was in June 2009, in relation to the statutory review of the *Valuers Act 2003* (NSW).

Colin also believes REINSW will play a vital role in establishing enforceable standards to lift the professionalism of the industry

– an issue he has raised several times as an REINSW Board member, as well as in his current role as Chair of the REINSW Valuers Chapter.

Practising what he preaches, Colin has maintained high professional standards throughout his career. This hasn't gone unnoticed. In October 2009, Colin was awarded the REINSW Woodrow Weight OBE Award – a lifetime achievement award in recognition of outstanding contribution to the real estate industry. He attributes his success to job satisfaction and quotes Charles Dickens to illustrate how he feels about being a real estate agent.

"Dickens says it best: 'It is well for a man to respect his vocation whatever it is, and to think himself bound to uphold it and to claim for it the respect it deserves'," says Colin. ♦

COLIN WITH HIS WIFE JAN AND SON ANDREW AT THE 2008 REINSW STATE CONFERENCE.



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BUSINESS AGENTS: Country business revival



BY KEL GIBSON

WHAT ARE THE TRENDS THAT MOTIVATE CITY DWELLERS TO MAKE A TREE OR SEA CHANGE AND WHY IS THIS RELEVANT TO BUSINESS AGENTS IN RURAL AND REGIONAL AREAS.

Job opportunities and lifestyle trends are changing the business landscape in rural and regional areas.

In the past, buying a business in the country was driven by a desire to escape the ratrace rather than career aspirations. This resulted in many taking on high risk endeavours. An unfamiliar occupation and the need for a different skill set presented many with a steep learning curve. Other challenges included adjusting to the slower pace of these areas and, in some cases, a lower income than they were accustomed to in the city.

Hospitality was the preferred field for many newcomers. They saw a gap in the market for cafes and restaurants enjoyed in metropolitan areas. This trend introduced ethnic cuisine and modern food styles and services to country areas. It also improved business standards through increased competition.



Other popular business choices were art galleries, bookshops, craft stores and specialist tourist activities.

Current trends

A lot has changed in recent years as large numbers of baby boomers retire in country and regional areas. The market has opened up and more businesses are now available for sale. This presents opportunities to purchase profitable enterprises at often very reasonable prices.

While many of these businesses need modernising, the introduction of a marketing strategy (including online promotion) and systems

to improve efficiency can have dramatic results. As these businesses are usually established and well known in the community, they can offer immediate cash flow, a strong customer base and recognised branding.

There are also opportunities to introduce city-based concepts and services into regional areas. Franchises and shopping centre developments have influenced buying patterns throughout Australia, including the country.

As a result, regional centres are reinventing themselves, emulating

MANY CAN MOVE TO AN AREA THAT OFFERS THE LIFESTYLE THEY ARE SEEKING WHILE ALSO RUNNING A VIABLE AND PROFITABLE BUSINESS.

the big cities with department stores and a host of other facilities.

Another trend that is on the rise is the relocation of home-based businesses to regional areas. The

THE BEST ADVICE YOU CAN GIVE SOMEONE WHO HAS MADE THE MOVE TO A REGIONAL OR RURAL AREA IS TO GET INVOLVED IN THEIR COMMUNITY.

online revolution has meant that many can move to an area that offers the lifestyle they are seeking

while also running a viable and profitable business using modern technology. Many web-based businesses, for example, can operate from idyllic locations and remain strong players in their respective markets.

Advising potential clients

Business agents should provide newcomers with a comprehensive overview of an area, including educational institutions, hospitals, health services, transport and communication infrastructure.

They should also advise them on requirements for relocation as well as guide business acquisition.

However, the best advice a business agent can give someone who has made the move to a regional or rural area is to get involved in their community by joining the local Chamber of Commerce, networking organisations and local clubs.

Newcomers inject fresh ideas, skills and systems to country

areas which enhance the professional, social and cultural fabric. In return they can enjoy unique business opportunities and a sought-after lifestyle not possible amid the congestion of urban living.

Kel Gibson is a Coffs Harbour based business agent with nearly 25 years' local and regional experience. Kel is an REINSW member and a previous winner of the REINSW Award for Excellence for Business Agency. ♦

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PROPERTY MANAGEMENT: When a tenant can't pay their rent



BY HELEN SCHULLER

THERE ARE MANY FORMS OF ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE TO TENANTS WHO CAN'T PAY THEIR RENT. REINSW MEMBERS TELL THE *REAL ESTATE JOURNAL* HOW THEY HAVE HELPED TENANTS EXPERIENCING FINANCIAL HARDSHIP.

Not being able to pay rent is a serious matter and it is important to understand what advice to give to tenants to ensure that the problem does not escalate.

Michael Conolly, Head of Network at McGrath Property Management, says the most important action that a tenant who is unable to pay their rent should take is to immediately contact their agent.

"No one wants to see an individual or a family without a roof over their head. So when someone is in trouble, it is only natural to start talking with them about the options that might be available.

"In many cases landlords and agents will work with tenants and put a plan in place, possibly deferred payments or reduced rent for a period, if the

"IN MANY CASES LANDLORDS AND AGENTS WILL WORK WITH TENANTS AND PUT A PLAN IN PLACE, POSSIBLY DEFERRED PAYMENTS."

situation warrants this. If the situation does not look to be temporary, the landlord and agent can work with the tenant to end the tenancy by breaking the lease."

Before you take legal action

Conolly suggests tenants speak with family and friends first to see if any solutions are available, especially if the lease is to be broken. If this fails, he then suggests those involved speak with government organisations such as Centrelink, Housing NSW or with charitable organisations such as the Salvation Army.

But agents must protect the interests of the landlord, their client, at all



times, he adds. "If a serious arrears situation occurs, as agents, we have a duty to protect our clients' interests. So the legal process needs to be started, even though we try to resolve this in an informal manner," says Conolly.

Ann Heffernan, Licensee-in-charge at Rose Rentals in the Blue Mountains outside Sydney, says the agency has helped tenants by offering a payment plan that includes extra money each week on top of the rent until they catch up.

"Other tenants have instigated their own budgeting where they pay an extra \$10 to \$20 per week so they always have money 'up their sleeve' when other bills come in," she says.

Charities

Other options open to tenants include assistance from charities that have systems in place to help people experiencing financial hardship.

Janelle Manders, property manager at Peter Rogers Real Estate in Bathurst, says that if a tenant is responsive and willing to discuss the matter after issuing termination and attending tribunal, she suggests that they contact the St Vincent de Paul Society for aid. The charity can offer aid in the form of two weeks' rent, she explains.

The tenant can also take advantage of the Housing NSW Rentstart program that offers tenants payments of rent arrears if this will save a tenancy.

"IF BOTH LANDLORD AND TENANT ARE HAPPIER, WE ARE BOUND TO BE – IT'S LESS STRESS ON EVERYONE INVOLVED."

"If eligible, Housing NSW will allow up to four weeks' rent, but they need a letter from the agent stating that tenant will not be terminated from the premises in a certain period following the payment," she says.

Manders believes that helping the tenant to access rent assistance is the best solution for the tenant and the owner.

"If both landlord and tenant are happier, we are bound to be – it's less stress on everyone involved and less cost too if you don't have to involve the sheriff," she says. ♦

Housing NSW Rentstart program

There are four main types of Rentstart financial assistance available to tenants – Rentstart Standard, Rentstart Plus, Tenancy Assistance and Rentstart Move.

Tenancy Assistance will be provided once in a 12-month period. It is for tenants in a private rental property who are facing eviction because of rental arrears incurred as a result of unexpected costs.

Unexpected costs may include (without limitation), those costs resulting from:

- a car accident
- funeral arrangements
- unexpected illness or injury.

Under these circumstances, Housing NSW will pay a maximum of four weeks' rent arrears. However, if a client reapplies for this assistance more than once within a two-year period, assistance with rent arrears will be provided for:

- maximum two weeks for unfurnished dwellings
- maximum three weeks for furnished dwellings.

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WISE INVESTMENT: It pays to be average



BY CHRIS GRAY

FIND OUT WHY MEDIAN-PRICED URBAN PROPERTIES MAKE THE SAFEST INVESTMENT.

As CEO of a property portfolio company, I advise clients to put their money into median-priced properties to ensure a low risk investment that gets results. The strength of this strategy is revealed in figures showing that none of the median priced properties we bought in blue chip suburbs dropped in value during last year's downturn. In fact, many have increased in value by \$50,000 to \$100,000.

A BLUE CHIP PROPERTY IN AN INNER SUBURBAN LOCATION OFFERS BOTH GOOD POTENTIAL YIELDS AND LONG-TERM CAPITAL GAINS.

Regardless of the finer details of your investment strategy, a blue chip property in an inner suburban location offers both good potential yields and long-term capital gains – the formula that gets results.

What to look for?

Look for properties within 10 to 20 per cent of the median price range for that area. These properties are affordable for around 80 per cent of renters, which means that you will rarely be without a tenant and will enjoy consistent yields. While I advise against selling, these properties are affordable for the majority of buyers, meaning you are virtually guaranteed to sell at a good price very quickly should the need arise.

Some investors are tempted by the potential for higher capital growth that can be achieved through high priced properties. The flipside is that these properties have less rental income and often remain vacant in slower property markets. Investors will achieve a better balance of

rental income and capital gain from a median-priced property.

Location, location

Location is also a key contributor to a property's potential for capital gain. Look in inner suburban areas 5 to 15 km from major cities with access to transport, leisure facilities and business districts. These features and facilities indicate potential for consistent growth in value.

Inner suburban areas also have finite supply levels due to building height restrictions. CBDs, on the other hand, offer no building height restrictions. Technically there is no limit to CBD supply – which means excess demand will be lower and therefore less likely to grow as quickly.

Tips for median-priced property investors

1. Research median prices through reputable channels such as www.propertyDATA.com.au.
2. Areas five to 15km from CBDs are subject to limited supply

INVESTORS WILL ACHIEVE A BETTER BALANCE OF RENTAL INCOME AND CAPITAL GAIN FROM A MEDIAN-PRICED PROPERTY.

of land and plenty of demand. Properties in these areas usually perform better.

3. Tenants and buyers also seek lifestyle. Ensure your property is near a popular leisure area such as beaches, lakes, parks and cafes.
4. Find out what type of property most people favour – house or unit? one or two bedder? – at the median price within the area.
5. Buy in an area you know well. Your knowledge in that market is what will give you a competitive edge over other buyers, and ensure you won't buy in the worst performing street or suburb.

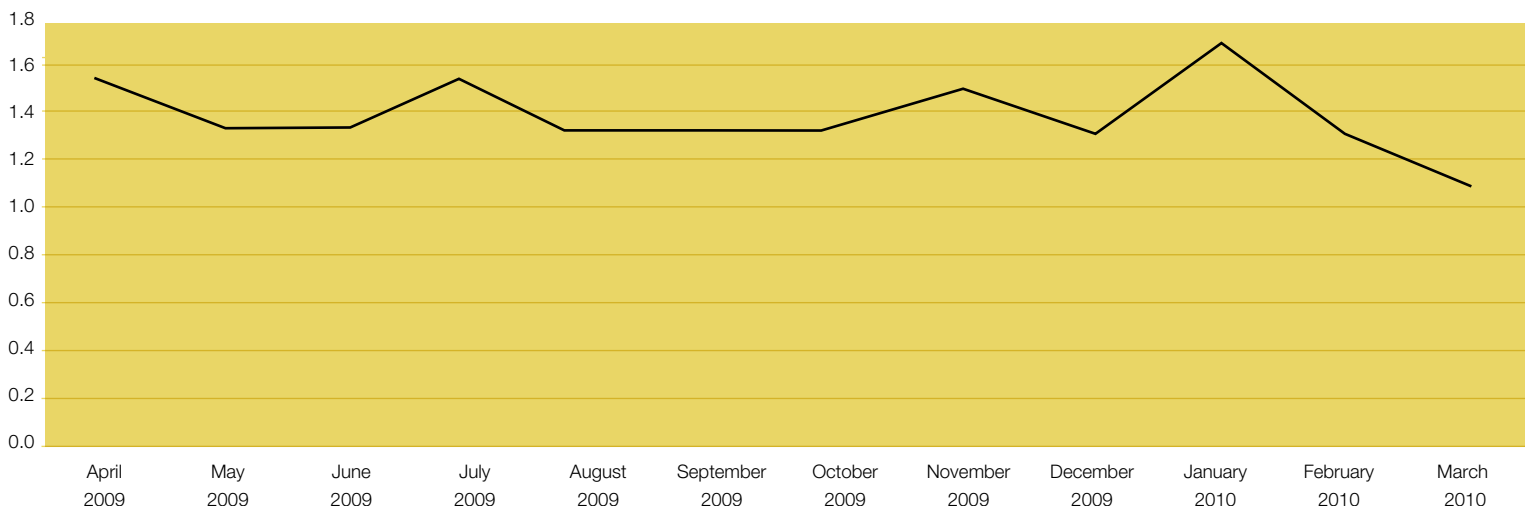
Chris Gray is a property expert who provides professional opinion in national media. He is a qualified accountant, buyers' agent, and mortgage broker. He is now CEO of property portfolio company Empire. ♦

Research

Check out the latest rate for your area. You can use it in your newsletters, information packs and discussions with potential investors!

Residential vacancy rate – Compiled by Inshgtrix on behalf of REINSW

SYDNEY	Apr-10 (%)	Mar-10 (%)	Feb-10 (%)	Jan-10 (%)		Apr-10 (%)	Mar-10 (%)	Feb-10 (%)	Jan-10 (%)
Inner	1.3	1.1	1.1	1.7	ALBURY	2.7	2.1	1.6	1.8
Middle	1.5	1.1	1.8	1.9	CENTRAL	1.4	1.4	1.9	2.5
Outer	1.2	1.0	1.3	1.4	COFFS HARBOUR	2.4	2.7	2.5	1.9
Total	1.3	1.1	1.3	1.7	FAR WEST	-	-	-	-
HUNTER					MID-NORTH COAST	2.8	1.9	1.9	1.1
Newcastle	1.9	1.5	1.9	3.4	MURRUMBIDGEE	2.6	3.4	2.6	3.7
Other	1.7	1.4	1.5	1.5	NEW ENGLAND	2.0	2.1	1.8	1.7
Total	1.8	1.4	1.7	2.5	NORTHERN RIVERS	2.4	2.3	1.8	2.3
ILLAWARRA					ORANA	2.1	1.9	1.5	3.0
Wollongong	0.9	1.1	1.7	2.0	RIVERINA	5.1	2.8	4.2	4.1
Other	1.0	1.2	1.5	0.8	SOUTH COAST	3.2	1.7	1.1	2.0
Total	0.9	1.1	1.6	1.5	SOUTH EASTERN	1.0	0.9	1.4	2.3
CENTRAL COAST									
	2.0	1.6	1.4	1.8					



Source: REINSW Vacancy Rate Survey

Did you realise that your rent roll information is used by the Reserve Bank of Australia when making its interest rate decisions? REINSW Vacancy Rates are a significant source of property information for economists, so make sure you contribute by sending us your vacancy rate figures each month.

Sydney weekly auction clearance rates – provided by Australian Property Monitors

	Inner Sydney		Inner West		Lower North		Inner East		Sydney	
	Number Auctioned	Auction Clearance Rate	Number Auctioned	Auction Clearance Rate	Number Auctioned	Auction Clearance Rate	Number Auctioned	Auction Clearance Rate	Number Auctioned	Auction Clearance Rate
2/5/10	142	82.9%	44	77.3%	70	81.1%	105	71.6%	599	73.0%
25/4/10	78	84.1%	46	89.4%	58	75.8%	74	79.5%	470	73.9%
18/4/10	113	84.2%	47	87.2%	49	73.6%	64	80.9%	570	73.3%
11/4/10	75	91.0%	36	89.2%	40	77.8%	34	72.5%	442	74.6%
4/4/10	56	91.5%	12	71.4%	25	75.9%	82	74.7%	282	81.9%
28/3/10	153	87.3%	71	79.7%	145	74.7%	195	77.6%	1008	74.0%
21/3/10	96	81.0%	56	82.1%	114	82.4%	111	81.8%	682	78.2%
14/3/10	69	71.8%	36	76.9%	105	83.9%	120	71.0%	583	67.9%
7/3/10	86	82.4%	25	84.0%	101	80.4%	83	81.8%	553	73.1%
28/2/10	125	84.6%	45	87.2%	131	84.1%	147	78.7%	769	77.8%
21/2/10	77	88.9%	24	91.7%	84	84.9%	107	87.4%	536	77.3%
14/2/10	50	85.2%	20	71.4%	45	87.5%	28	89.3%	342	76.4%

*snr = sample not reliable

Are you a budding auctioneer?



THE 2010 REINSW NOVICE AUCTIONEERS COMPETITION IS YOUR CHANCE TO FIND OUT IF YOU HAVE WHAT IT TAKES TO BECOME AN AUCTIONEER.

Several well-known auctioneers in NSW began their careers by taking part in the REINSW Novice Auctioneers Competition. If you've ever considered a career in auctioneering, here's your chance to give it a try.

Entrants must nominate to compete in a local REINSW Divisional Novice Auctioneers Competition. The entry requirements are that the participant:

- is over 16 years
- lives in NSW
- has not completed more than 10 auctions, or has no more than six months experience as a livestock or chattel auctioneer.

If you meet these requirements, you need to source an item to auction. It can be anything from a bottle of wine to sports memorabilia or a weekend away. Proceeds from the sale of the items are donated to local charities.

Finalists in these Divisional competitions go on to compete in

the REINSW State Final in Sydney, which is held in conjunction with the REINSW State Conference.

The winner is not determined by the amount of money raised but, rather, their ability to auction the item with confidence and poise.

They are also judged on how well the item is described, the control of bidding and the use of gavel.

To enter, attend or sponsor a Divisional competition, please call REINSW on (02) 9264 2343 or email divisions@reinsw.com.au ♦

Save the date

The following REINSW Divisional Novice Auctioneers Competitions have been confirmed. More event dates and details will be announced shortly.

Riverina: 29 July 2010

Central Coast:
11 August 2010

Northern Beaches:
26 August 2010

East Division:
6 September 2010

Nepean, Hawkesbury and Blue Mountains:
7 September 2010

Albury:
10 September 2010

St George and Sutherland Shire:
21 September

Inner West:
28 September

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