



**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT**  
**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF MEMBERS**  
**FRIDAY, 15 OCTOBER 2021**

It's difficult to imagine a more challenging and complex environment than the one we have right now.

Enterprise bargaining defined our year. Previously, I observed that bargaining had exposed significant flaws in our industrial environment and that the capacity of those with whom we bargain varies significantly. Where the bargaining parties prepare for bargaining ahead of negotiations, a significant amount can be achieved within a confined period. Where, however, a party arrives without having prepared to a reasonable standard, negotiations are often protracted.

These variances in capacity must be addressed by engagement over time. That is, expectations as to how bargaining is conducted must be re-set. Whilst difficult, it's a change that is both necessary and overdue.

However, bargaining has also highlighted the strength of member contributions. We have benefited greatly from member insights participating in bargaining. We hope that this increased participation has helped demystify the bargaining process for those members.

When the pandemic arrived, we had no idea how this would impact member engagement. Each month, we've measured the website visits, Yammer reads, YouTube views and attendees at meetings. Since March 2020, our overall level of engagement has consistently increased.

The prolonged nature of this bargaining round - which has been exacerbated by meeting remotely - has tested our capacity. In the coming year, I expect that we will focus on the implementation of a number of major agreements, even as bargaining continues for doctors, allied health professionals and commences for community health members.

I would like to acknowledge the commitment of VHIA staff who've continued the bargaining process this year with great diligence, patience and persistence under unusual and, at times, inordinately difficult circumstances. I would also like to thank the members for their willingness to contribute and participate in the process, for their frank and fearless feedback and their on-going support.

I would like to thank Dale Fraser for his support and advice during his period as President / Board Chair and look forward to his continued involvement on the Board. Thanks, also, to departing Board members, Felicity Topp and Jacque Phillips for their contribution to making VHIA a better organisation.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stuart McCullough', written in a cursive style.

**Stuart McCullough**  
**Chief Executive Officer**