

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF MEMBERS
Friday, 12 October 2018

A year from now, the next round of bargaining will have started. Between now and then, our focus will be on preparedness for bargaining. This requires not only close member engagement as we seek to improve our agreements but the development of transparent bargaining systems.

The past twelve months have been defined by the conclusion of the last enterprise agreements from a bargaining round that began in 2016; including those covering dentists, dental therapists, doctors in training, medical specialists, maintenance workers and biomedical engineers. More than half a dozen agreements applying to community health have also been the subject of bargaining.

During the course of this round, VHIA made some important changes. Each negotiation in the past year had 'real time' updates through the VHIA Community App. For the first time ever, members could see what was discussed at each bargaining meeting and – more importantly – have input. The provision of 'real time' updates will now form part of our standard approach to bargaining. To support this, we'll need to ensure as many members as possible are both connected to and familiar with our communication platforms.

In addition to real time updates, each agreement had an implementation guide published and an implementation issues list developed, resulting in additional materials to support members. Those additional materials have included written implementation materials and podcasts. We reported on the implementation issues list each month and the podcasts have had over 5000 views in the last year. We also conducted EBA Forums for each major agreement, which were recorded and remain available to members through our website.

Our primary focus over the past two years has been to increase our engagement with members. Monthly meetings across all parts of our membership have been maintained, along with various EBA reference groups. In addition, a Payroll Reference Group has been established and we've continued to conduct our Rural and Regional Forums twice per year. In all, there are more than 340 industry meetings currently on our 2018 calendar.

Whilst expanding communication platforms and establishing reliable, predictable engagement opportunities represents progress, important work lies ahead.

For some time we've spoken about the four stages of bargaining (Bargaining, Implementation, Review and Planning). This is a way to subject agreements to a process of continuous improvement. Several key agreements are currently in the 'Review' phase. However, between now and the next bargaining round our key priority is to develop and publish a bargaining framework.

The purpose of the VHIA Bargaining Framework is to make the bargaining process clear. We know that one of the key frustrations for members is the lack of transparency and uncertainty as to how some outcomes are reached.

The VHIA Bargaining Framework will do two things – firstly, it requires VHIA to apply a consistent, system-based approach to bargaining. In doing so, we'll be taking into account member feedback received over the past two years. Secondly, the VHIA Bargaining Framework will ensure members know precisely how bargaining will work. This will make the bargaining process less mysterious, with members knowing how to get the information they want and how to participate in the bargaining process.

In June 2018, the VHIA Board endorsed the VHIA Industrial Relations Framework. This document sets out the work we need to do with members to improve the bargaining experience. In the first part of 2019, we'll publish the VHIA Bargaining Framework and engage with members. All this activity is intended to ensure that by the time we commence bargaining in September 2019, members are both informed and confident as to how bargaining will operate.

We thank members for their participation and support over the past year. Although much progress has been made, there's still much to do and we look forward to working more closely than ever with members in the year to come.

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

Stuart McCullough
Chief Executive Officer