



Chairman and Office Bearers Report

Vasili Tsoutouras – President AEPMA

29th June 2020

Dear All

It has been an extremely active period for the Pest Control industry in Australia. All AEPMA branches through the national body have been active and, the events of the most recent times have highlighted the importance of having strong industry association that can meet the challenges that we are currently facing.

All of the AEPMA Branch AGM's have been held and I would like to take everyone who participated and congratulations to all elected office bearers.

I would like to put on record my thanks to those of you who participated in the Industry Training Package. I particularly acknowledge Troy Dawson with his efforts in assisting in this review. The process of the training package reform was undertaken under the direction of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG), Industry and Skills Council and the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC). Artibus Innovation was engaged by the AISC as the Skill Services Organisation to manage this process. Artibus Innovation has established an Industry Reference Committee to review and develop training packages in line with the Australian Government reform process.

One of the effects of the COAG agreement has been the need for those in the industry who did not complete competency units in core units 5,6 and 18 to be trained and assessed. Additionally, timber pest units 8 & 10 will also be required by all States.

This has been particularly felt in Victoria where AEPMA has been working with Victorian Health to put in place a program that will enable those members in Victoria who need to undertake training / assessment. We have also been able to access funding from the Victorian / Commonwealth Government to meet 50% of the final cost. In further areas of interest for training, we have scheduled 2 new courses for Field Biologist training and we are currently reviewing training for all of our Industry Codes of Practice

I would like to turn my attention to the ongoing Covid-19 crisis, although outside the organisations reporting period. Between March to date, AEPMA has continually sought to update members on developments regarding Covid-19. We have written to all Premier's, Health Minister's and Chief Ministers of the Territory Governments regarding Pest Control becoming an "Essential Service" We have also circularised to all members, details regarding the JobKeeper package which has attracted a large amount of interest.

Unfortunately, due to Covid-19 restrictions we had to postpone our conference at the Gold Coast Star Casino until the 22-24th September 2021. However, we are looking at other ideas regarding "virtual workshops" and will keep all our members posted when details are finalised.

AEPMA has also established a steering committee of major industry shareholders to assist in providing an agreed response and activities to support the pest control industry going forward.

- AEPMA produced 2 letters, a general letter that could be modified by an individual company and a generic letter supporting the importance of professional pest control management as an essential service when Covid-19 was at its peak.

- We established a Code of Practice working party and developed a Code of Practice for Disinfection which potentially represents a new growth area for the pest control industry.
- We developed a social media strategy to further support the industry by sharing information and making it available to all stakeholders.

I would also like to report that the APVMA submission for “Consultation on use patterns for anticoagulant rodenticide products” was finalised and submitted on the 25th May 2020. This received a positive response from the APVMA with a follow up meeting to be organised after the 3rd July 2020.

Over the last couple of years, the pest control industry has continued to work on its Codes of Practice. In terms of the administration of our Codes of Practice. The rodent code of practice has been the latest document completed. We have reviewed and updated all of our codes to reflect comments received from the ACCC and we hope that in the next 12 months, to have all the codes reviewed and into a uniformed format.

The job of being AEPMA President is always challenging, and I would like to acknowledge all of the AEPMA Board Members, Branch Secretaries, and especially all AEPMA Members for their continued support over the last year.

Our membership numbers have been consistent and using published data from the ABS, and the Australian Taxation Office and we can safely say that more than 80% of the work undertaken in pest control is undertaken by AEPMA members. The AEPMA brand is a strong one and, your membership counts.

Finally I thank you for your continued support and the privilege of representing this fine industry and despite our current problems I do believe that as an industry we will come out stronger then ever.

Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Vasili Tsoutouras', with a large, stylized flourish above the name.

Vasili Tsoutouras