

AMBC Victoria President's Report 2012/2013



Ladies and gentlemen,

It is with a great deal of pleasure that I deliver the President's report after my first year in this role. But first I must acknowledge what an important year 2013 is for AMBC Victoria as this is our 40th anniversary as a Business Council. A truly exceptional achievement and Hollywood could not have scripted it better that it coincided with the start of the Malaysia Australia Free Trade Agreement (MAFTA) on January 1st.

As a Business Council, we are genuinely and rightfully proud of our longevity and reputation for being one of the most pro active and professional business councils in Victoria.

I would like to start the report from a personal perspective by saying that being elected President of the AMBC Victoria is a major highlight and a very personal milestone in my professional career.

Being both President and a member of the AMBC Victoria's Committee has given me the opportunity to work with an extraordinary group of individuals that comprise the Executive Team and together we have collectively made a very positive contribution and a real difference for the Business Council.

At the first Committee meeting following the 2012 AGM I came to the meeting and made a very simple statement about what I believed should be AMBC Victoria's goals for the year ahead – and that was – that we should strive to make a minimum \$6,000 net surplus each year and increase our membership base to 100 members. For any organisation to be successful (irrespective of size), three basic fundamentals need to be in place and they are –

1. Good solid administration
2. Great marketing – and
3. Giving customers, in our case our members, sponsors and supporters – an exceptional, rewarding and enjoyable experience.

The Committee certainly delivered a solid administrative, marketing and client experience outcome that has been reflected in this year's very healthy surplus of \$10,217 and membership growth to just under 60 financial members. This success would not have been possible without the efforts, commitment and dedication of the Executive Committee –

Mike Anderson
Juris Austrums
James Fabris

Andy Lau
Trevor Haines
Raj Thanarajah

Lee Aik Sern
James Liew

Secretariats **Anita Kilkenny** and **Cheryl Pisterman** and Committee Assistant **Jeannie Tai**

It is also important to acknowledge the contribution and support the business council has received from our two very important and extremely supportive Honorary Executive Committee members – Malaysian Consul General to Victoria **Dato' Dr Mohamad Rameez Yahaya** – and representing the Victorian Government from the Department of State Development, Business & Innovation, Senior Project Officer, Trade Engagement ASEAN **Darrin Vouch**.

Both **Dato' Dr Rameez** and **Darrin Vouch** make sure that we are in tune and in sync with the latest developments at a government level with Malaysia and Victoria.

MAFTA has been a significant driving force and subject of interest since mid 2012. This has been reflected in our AMBC functions and information events being sell out successes.

The quality, content and presenters at our events have also been roundly applauded and acknowledged and I'm pleased to say that these events were the catalyst for much of our membership growth last financial year with 2 to 3 new members on average joining our ranks each month. So that was the year that was and now it's time focus on the remainder of 2013 and beyond.

Firstly, I wish to welcome the 2013-14 Committee and that will be comprised of the following members:

Mike Anderson
Juris Austrums
James Fabris

Trevor Haines
Andy Lau
Siew Ling Lian

Peter Moran
Joe Perri
Felix Wong

Of course, our Honorary members **Dato' Dr Rameez and Darrin Vouch** are automatic inclusions in the team and we look forward to their continued counsel and support.

I also extend a very warm welcome to our new Secretariat **Sharon Anderson**. **Sharon** will be taking up the reins as our Business Council's Secretariat from September 1.

It's important that any Committee is comprised of a balanced team of individuals from diverse backgrounds but all are united by a collective goal of working together to take AMBC to greater heights of success and achievement. The 2013 – 14 Committee certainly has these credentials.

I would also like to advise that I am seeking the support of our members for another one year term as AMBC Victoria's President. However, if successfully re-elected, this will be my final year in the role as I am seeking to stand for the position of AMBC's National President in 2014 and under the rules I am unable to hold dual positions. Hence the one year term. But before my departure in 2014, there is much to do over the coming 12 months.

One of the first priorities for the new Committee will be to review and modernize the current constitution that has become outdated. Under the present constitution, each year the entire Committee is required stand down and seek reelection.

This situation has the potential to destabilize the operational integrity and continuity of the Business Council and I believe must be replaced with two year rolling terms for the Committee with only half the group required to step down annually for new members or for reelection.

Within the AMBC membership, we currently have three distinct groups comprised as follows –

- Large company / corporate members
- SMEs or individuals that fall into two categories
 - long established members with a good understanding of the requirements for doing business or investing in Malaysia
 - new members seeking knowledge and insight into doing business or investing in Malaysia

When it comes to member benefits and services – one size does not suit all. So the future will demand that services and benefits we deliver and provide to our members are more appropriately targeted and delivered to these specific needs.

In wrapping up my first President's message, I again acknowledge that as a Business Council we have had a great year and this momentum will carry AMBC forward to many more successes and achievements in the future.

I am confident that your new Executive team will follow in the footsteps of their predecessors and work with determination and enthusiasm on behalf of our members.

Finally, as a Business Council we are unique and in that we truly endeavour to make our fellow members feel welcomed, valued, appreciated and respected. It's for that reason that I'm proud to have been the AMBC's President for 2012 – 13 and thank you for the privilege to have been of service to our members and Victoria and Malaysia.

Thank you



Joe Perri
President – AMBC Victoria