

BIC Column September 2014

As this is the Australasia Bus and Coach National Conference and Expo issue let me begin with a warm welcome to all of you who are reading this at the event.

Those of you who couldn't make it to the Gold Coast this year, I hope to see you at a future BIC National Conference. The 2015 National Conference will be held in Singapore from November 8 to 11 so watch this space for more information in the coming months.

The theme at this year's Conference is Driving Excellence; this is an opportunity for Industry to reflect on how we can do things better as bus operators, bus manufacturers and suppliers.

From the BIC's perspective this is an opportunity for us to think about how we can represent Industry better and how the BIC and States can work together to deliver better results.

Whether you are at the National Conference and Expo or reading this in your office, we need the Industry to tell us about how we can better represent you and help your businesses meet the challenges of a changing economy and operating environment.

It has been three years since the BIC National Conference in Fiji, which was a seminal event in terms of industry reform. A lot of the agenda that was laid out in Fiji has taken shape and continues to take shape. The rest of this column outlines what has been achieved since 2011 and what is on the table for the future.

Reforms have been achieved in three key areas of the BIC and State Associations industry representation activities, events, communications and marketing and how we structure membership.

In the area of events the 2014 Australasia National Conference and Expo breaks the mould and sets in place a move towards a single show each year. This annual bus show will move between and be hosted by State Associations and not necessarily be aligned with a BIC Conference. Next year's Australasia Bus and Coach Expo will be hosted by the Bus Association of Victoria in Melbourne July 8-9 2015.

Following on from the development of the single trade show and Expo concept we have moved towards the development of a strategic industry media and branding strategy. This features the promotion of the industry in a united manner as the "Bus Australia Network". The Bus Australia Network branding will be launched at this year's National Conference and Expo and you will see the branding used in materials produced by the BIC and State Associations.

This single industry network sends a powerful message to the parliamentarians, bureaucrats and general public that we are an industry that speaks with one voice on key issues. The saying that disunity is death is one I use a lot and this move to a "Bus Australia Network" concept for advocacy efforts and public statements has great potential to deliver results.

The way that BIC and State Association Membership is structured is changing to reflect the changes to our industry over the past decade. BIC and State Associations have been working with industry in defining a fee and eligibility structure that provides the best value proposition for bus operators and suppliers.

This will continue to be a focus for BIC over the next few years.

So over the course of this National Conference and Expo, and the coming year, I hope to hear from all of you in the Industry about how we drive excellence at an industry representation level and how what we do here in Canberra and at State Associations level will grow your business and continuously improve how you do things in your business.