

ASSOCIATIONS

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CEOs for purpose

*Eithne Irving, Leigh-anne Shannon
and Helen White share their stories*

- ◆ OHAA: from 18 associations into 1 national voice
- ◆ Salary Survey benchmarks NFP remuneration
- ◆ Membership and Professions Summits hosted by QT Canberra and SMC
- ◆ Role of courts regarding aggrieved members



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and Helen White

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Since 2004, Associations Forum has:
Presented 6,545 hours to 42,317 delegates,
hence 166,266 hours delivered.
Provided 1,245 associations training presentations

Associations assist members during war with Iran



Military action in March and early April 2026 to contain the security threat posed by Iran's nuclear and ballistic missile programs and support of regional proxies has impacted Australia.

As with the Covid pandemic crisis

of 2020 and 2021, Australian associations have come to the fore in being the voice of and providing support to their members.

Innes Willox, Chief Executive of the national employer association, **Australian Industry Group**, focused on economic impact. "Targeted support to impacted industries, concessional loans and fuel reductions should help alleviate some of the acute supply chain pressures caused through the Middle East crisis," said Mr Willox. "A nationally coordinated approach, with support from the states to manage the consequences of disruption in fuel and industrial markets, is what is required as challenges change and grow in coming months.

Australian Trucking Association Chair Mark Parry released a plan to save Australia's 60,000 trucking businesses from the crippling fuel price increases. The terminal gate price of diesel increased more than AUD\$1.05 per litre since the start of the war. Diesel is one of the largest costs faced by trucking businesses. Owner drivers and small trucking businesses are facing potential ruin within weeks.

"The ATA is calling on the Australian and state governments to activate the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements immediately to help small trucking businesses. The DRFA typically offers cash grants and concessional loans to businesses with fewer than 20 employees," Mr Parry said. "The Government should temporarily reduce the

industry's road user charge and review the reduction on a month-to-month basis."

Supporting his President, Australian Trucking Association CEO Mathew Munro says "Trucking businesses cannot absorb this increase. Without immediate action, the trucks will stop. And when the trucks stop, Australia stops."

Hamish McIntyre, President of **National Farmers Federation**, supported moves to improve supply of fertiliser and sought financial help for farmers. "We also want to see financial support for regional small to medium businesses who are doing it tough as a direct result of this conflict," said Mr McIntyre. "This issue poses a real and immediate threat to business viability."

Further, Mr McIntyre addressed the need for greater supply chain resilience, "We need to lift our sights to ensure this is the last time we find ourselves so vulnerable to global shocks. We must use this moment to strengthen Australia's sovereign capability, so we're not back in this position again and farmers have the certainty to keep producing the food and fibre we all rely on."

These valuable statements and actions from industry bodies remind us of the value associations play in bringing sectors together during difficult times. 

John Peacock AM

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Retail associations confirm national amalgamation

As of March 2026, Australian Retail Council has officially launched following the amalgamation of the Australian Retailers Association and National Retail Association. The newly formed body represents a unified voice for the retail sector, backed by strong member support and regulatory approval. This milestone marks a significant shift in industry representation, strengthening national advocacy, streamlining services, and positioning the sector to better navigate ongoing economic, workforce, and regulatory challenges. 

APRA AMCOS celebrates centenary of achievement

100 years ago, six music publishers met in Sydney to establish the Australasian Performing Right Association (APRA), founded on the principle that songwriters and composers should be paid for their work. That vision has since evolved into APRA AMCOS (Australasian Performing Right Association and Australasian Mechanical Copyright Owners Society), now representing more than 128,000 creators across Australia and New Zealand. To mark its centenary, a year-long program of events and initiatives will celebrate songwriting's cultural and economic impact. Highlights include major awards, collaborative programs, and a digital timeline showcasing a century of influential music moments and milestones. 

CPA Australia marks 140th Anniversary with focus on future leadership

In 2026, CPA Australia marks its 140th anniversary, highlighting a long-standing contribution to the accounting profession. Since 1886, the organisation has helped shape professional standards, education, and ethical practices across Australia and internationally. With a global membership base, it continues to influence policy and business thinking. Looking ahead, CPA Australia is prioritising innovation, sustainability, and digital capability, aiming to equip members with the skills needed to navigate rapid technological change and an increasingly complex economic environment. 

AMA federal body changes membership composition

The Australian Medical Association has confirmed a structural shift in 2026, with AMA ACT following AMA Tasmania by formally joining as a branch and relinquishing its previous separate incorporation. At the same time, AMA Queensland has withdrawn from the federated model, marking a significant change in representation. The developments highlight evolving governance arrangements as the federal AMA seeks to maintain cohesive national advocacy while adapting to changing state and territory dynamics. 

ASORC assists rehabilitation for 50 years

Australian Society of Rehabilitation Counsellors (ASORC) is celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2026, marking five decades of advancing the rehabilitation counselling profession. Since its establishment, the organisation has played a key role in setting professional standards, supporting practitioners, and advocating for improved outcomes for people with injury, illness, and disability. The milestone highlights ASORC's enduring contribution to the sector and its continued focus on innovation, workforce development, and strengthening support systems across Australia. 

Changes at ACHPER as Victorian entity goes it alone

After decades of supporting Victorian teachers as Australian Council for Health, Physical Education and Recreation (ACHPER) Victoria, the association has rebranded as Active Education Australia, reflecting its evolution into an independent, national body. Active Education Australia has resigned as a member of the ACHPER Australia federation of state bodies, with the other five states remaining as members. As it is now a national organisation, Active Education Australia aims to respond to the diverse needs of communities throughout Australia while continuing to champion quality education and active lifestyles. 

SAVE THE DATE: 1 - 2 SEPTEMBER 2026
ASSOCIATIONS CONFERENCE EUROPE



Tania Wolff becomes President of Law Council

Law Council of Australia has appointed Tania Wolff as President, commencing her term at the start of the year. Ms Wolff succeeds the outgoing leadership team and brings extensive experience in commercial law and governance. Her appointment comes as the Council continues to advocate on national legal policy, access to justice, and regulatory reform. The organisation said the leadership transition will support ongoing engagement with government and stakeholders, while reinforcing the profession's role in upholding the rule of law and maintaining public confidence in Australia's legal system. 



Shaw, Johns and Froud to lead YMCA Australia

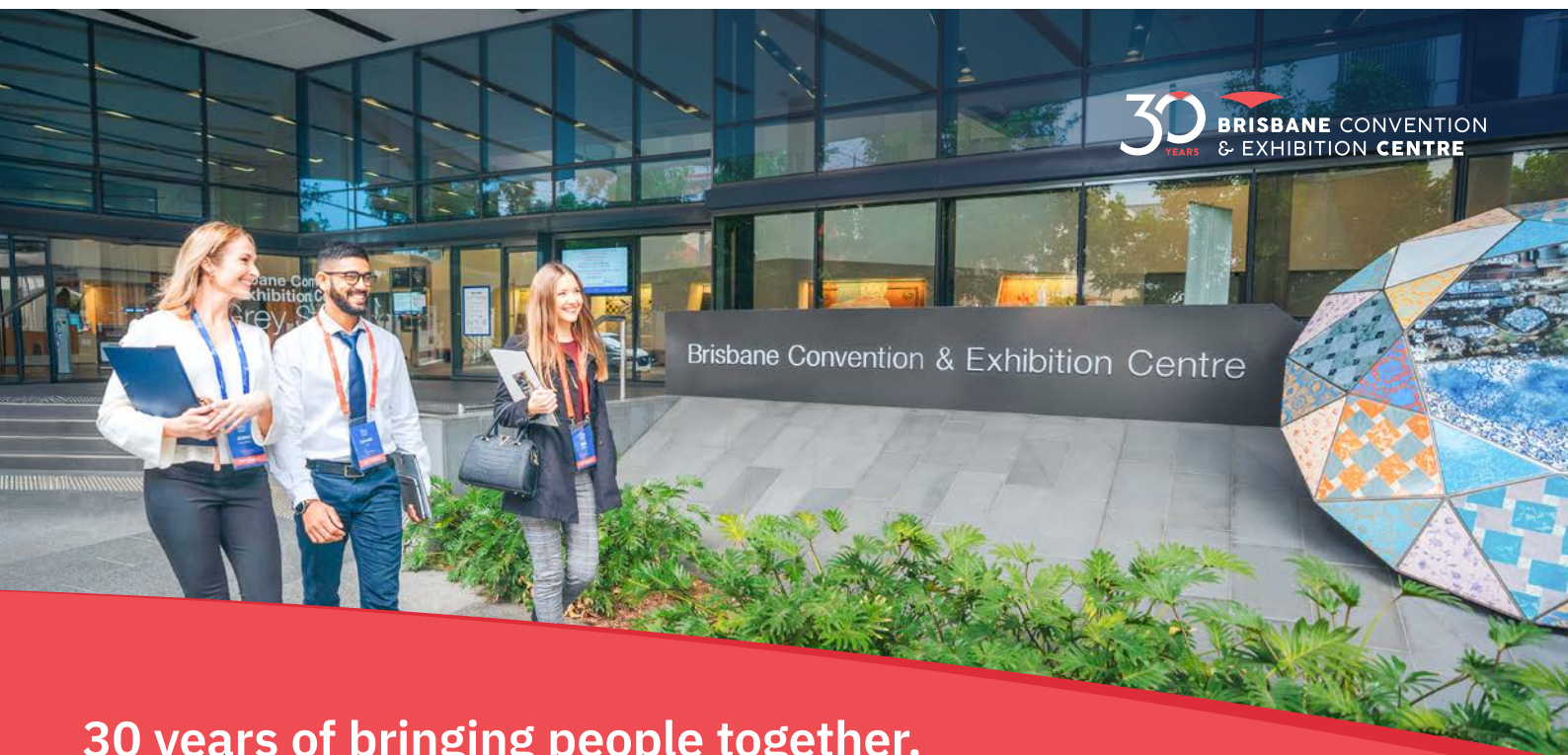
Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) Australia, a community organisation focused on youth development and social impact, has announced its latest Board office bearers.

Amelia Shaw has been reappointed as President, with Leigh Johns OAM continuing as Vice President. Aaron Froud has been appointed Treasurer, succeeding Tom Stephenson, who has stepped down from the role after several years of service and will remain on the Board as a Director. 



Paula Taylor is President of Australian Science Teachers Association

The Australian Science Teachers Association (ASTA) has confirmed Paula Taylor as President for the 2026 term, continuing her leadership within the national science education peak body. A highly experienced STEM educator, Ms Taylor has been a long-standing contributor to ASTA governance and professional programs. Her leadership is focused on strengthening science teaching capacity, improving national policy engagement, and supporting educators across Australia. The organisation said her continued presidency reinforces its commitment to advancing high-quality science education and teacher development nationwide. 



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OHAA: from 18 associations into 1 national voice

The establishment of Oral Health Association of Australia (OHAA) marks a significant milestone in the evolution of the oral health profession in Australia. Formed through the unification of two long-standing professional bodies – the Dental Hygienists Association of Australia (DHAA) and the Australian Dental and Oral Health Therapists' Association (ADOHTA) – OHAA represents a strategic consolidation aimed at strengthening advocacy, professional identity, and patient outcomes across Australia.

The OHAA officially commenced operations on 1 July 2025, following a decisive vote by members of both DHAA and ADOHTA in December 2024 to create a single, unified professional association. This unification was the culmination of many years of planning and collaboration, driven by a shared vision to unify oral health practitioners, including dental hygienists, dental therapists, and oral health therapists, under one national body. However, the 2025 bilateral unification has a longer backstory. It was in 2013 that DHAA commenced unifying its six state, two territory and one federal body into one entity. Similarly, ADOHTA unified its six state, two territory and one federal association into a unitary organisation. This effectively meant that 18 entities have now become 1 Australia-wide body – OHAA.

Successful outcomes already

OHAA President Cheryl Dey is pleased with the results of the unification. "Whilst the parties to the unification were optimistic for the future, the combined organisation has proved to work very well together," said Ms Dey. "The Board, CEO, management team and members have swiftly united behind the common focus and mission of OHAA." Today, the OHAA serves as the peak professional association representing oral health practitioners (OHPs) in Australia. "By consolidating resources and leadership, OHAA aims to address long-standing gaps in oral health policy and promote more integrated, preventive models of care," said Ms Dey. "We will be a central force in advancing preventive oral healthcare, aligning with broader healthcare trends that emphasise early intervention and interdisciplinary collaboration."

Unifications and amalgamations are worthwhile

Kathy Nguyen, Managing Lawyer at Governology, involved in project managing both the initial series of unifying the state and territory bodies into national bodies and the subsequent bilateral unification into OHAA, reflects on the changes and outcome. "Amalgamations take time and are challenging processes; however they are certainly worthwhile," said Ms Nguyen. "Board composition is important. The inaugural OHAA Board had balanced representation between both parties to the unification. This initial structure will dissipate at future board elections when candidates will be seen as being from only one organisation."

Pre-unification landscape

The DHAA was a long-established professional body representing dental hygienists, as well as many oral health therapists and dental therapists. Over time, the DHAA expanded its scope beyond hygienists alone, reflecting the evolving nature of the oral health workforce. ADOHTA represented dental therapists and oral health therapists, professions that had themselves evolved through earlier structural and educational changes in dentistry. ADOHTA's existence reflects earlier consolidation trends in the profession—particularly the integration of dental therapy and oral health therapy roles into a broader, degree-qualified workforce.

This evolution mirrored changes in education, where oral health therapy emerged as a combined discipline encompassing both preventive (hygiene) and restorative (therapy) scopes of practice.

While the 2025 unification is the most visible structural change, it sits within a longer trajectory of professional integration in Australia:

- ♦ Dental therapy and dental hygiene, once distinct professions with separate training pathways, increasingly overlapped in practice and education.
- ♦ The emergence of the oral health therapist (OHT) role combined these scopes into a single university-qualified profession.
- ♦ Professional associations, including DHAA and ADOHTA, gradually expanded their membership bases to reflect this blended workforce.

These earlier shifts created both overlapping representation and fragmented advocacy, which ultimately motivated the move toward a single, unified association.

Conclusion

The formation of Oral Health Association of Australia marks a pivotal moment in the history of the Australian oral health profession.

Emerging from the unification of the DHAA and ADOHTA and built upon decades of gradual professional integration, OHAA embodies a modern, unified approach to oral healthcare.

By consolidating representation and aligning the diverse branches and multiple associations of the oral health workforce, OHAA is well positioned to lead the profession into a future defined by collaboration, prevention, and improved access to care for all Australians. 

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ATC's proposed \$5 billion racecourse sale rejected by members

Australian Turf Club (ATC) is a leading racing organisation responsible for managing and promoting thoroughbred racing in Sydney, operating major racecourses including Royal Randwick, Rosehill Gardens, Warwick Farm, and Canterbury Park. It is a company limited by guarantee with around 11,000 members.

In 2025, the ATC explored a potential transaction with the NSW Government as part of broader discussions around housing supply and infrastructure expansion in Greater Sydney. The Rosehill Racecourse site, located in a strategically significant growth corridor east of Parramatta, was viewed as a potential candidate for large-scale residential redevelopment. With Sydney facing ongoing housing shortages, the proposal aligned with government objectives to unlock well-located land for new housing. The AUD\$5 billion headline price was the central benchmark used.

From a commercial perspective, the deal carried potential upside. A sale could have generated significant capital for the ATC, enabling reinvestment into racing infrastructure, modernisation of venues such as Randwick and Warwick Farm, and long-term financial sustainability for the club.

The Australian Turf Club was required to call a member vote due to its constitutional and corporate governance structure. Rosehill Racecourse is

considered a core or "principal racing asset" of the club. Under the ATC's constitution, any proposal to sell, dispose of, or materially change the use of such an asset cannot be approved solely by the board. It triggers a requirement for member approval via a formal vote and a special resolution threshold.

However, the proposal encountered strong resistance from key stakeholders. ATC members expressed concerns about long-term implications for the racing industry, including the loss of a major metropolitan track and potential erosion of heritage value. The ATC held an Extraordinary General Meeting on 27 May 2025 for members to vote on the proposal. Formal notice of the meeting was issued in line with Corporations Act requirements. At the EGM, 44% of members voted for the sale, below the required 75% majority. In the absence of broad stakeholder support, the proposal failed to progress. The NSW Government stepped back, and the ATC did not advance the sale for formal approval. 

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Associations Membership Summit demonstrates growth, engagement, and value

Association membership specialists convened at QT Canberra for a day of shared learning, candid discussions and practical strategies to elevate the member experience.

Associations Forum held its eighth Associations Membership Summit in February 2026 at QT Canberra, bringing together membership professionals and association leaders for a practical and engaging day of discussion. The one-day program featured speakers from sectors including agriculture, information security, counselling, accommodation and hospitality, complementary medicine, environmental management, healthcare, legal services, and public health.

Conference Chair Tony Gleeson said the Summit focused on real-world challenges and practical solutions. “The sessions showed how associations are adapting to change and finding new ways to stay relevant to their members,” he said.

Several sessions focused on technology and changing expectations. Megan Spielvogel spoke about engaging members across generations, while Jodie McKenzie outlined how system improvements have strengthened member services, recruitment and retention.

Advocacy was another key theme, with James Goodwin demonstrating how clear and consistent messaging can attract and retain members.

Other sessions looked at governance and member structures, including a legal perspective on constitutions and membership rights. A healthcare case study highlighted how involving members in designing services can lead to more relevant offerings.

The program addressed challenges in member relationships, with insights from the public health sector on managing difficult situations and turning them into constructive outcomes.

The 2026 Associations Membership Summit reinforced the importance of staying responsive to member needs and continuing to improve how associations deliver value. 

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Associations are used to doing more with less, often relying on in-house teams to deliver key initiatives. While your internal knowledge is invaluable, when it comes to delivering successful events, particularly large conferences or AGMs, logistics can quickly become overwhelming.

Planning a multi-day program involves a significant number of moving parts. From abstract management, speaker coordination, exhibitor liaisons to venue and supplier negotiations, and everything in between, these tasks are complex, time sensitive, and require simultaneously the attention to detail and ability to maintain a clear view of the bigger picture. More often than not, the internal teams are already stretched across multiple aspects of their full-time responsibilities without adding on the conference management.

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Association Professions Summit highlights pathways, standards and the future

Leading associations gathered in Sydney for a day of discussion and insights on strengthening professional associations and the value they deliver to members and society.

Associations Forum held the Association Professions Summit at Sydney Masonic Centre on 4 December 2025, bringing together representatives from healthcare, engineering, marketing, legal, education and other professions.

Summit Chair Lewis Kaplan opened with a session on becoming a “must-join” association, outlining key characteristics that define a profession and the role associations play in elevating standards and relevance. He emphasised the importance of clear value propositions and strong member alignment.

A session on career pathways and credentialing featured Kathryn Zeitz, Jonathan Jones, and Takis Diakoumis, who discussed the growing importance of professional designations and micro-credentials in supporting career progression and industry recognition.

Continuing professional development was explored by Gagan Cheema and Sarah Malcher, focusing on balancing compliance with meaningful learning outcomes and designing accessible programs across career stages.

Bridgit Hogan shared lessons on credentialing and governance, while Sandra South discussed the development of an independent complaints body to strengthen transparency and public confidence.

Innovation in pathways was explored by Sam Wilson, who outlined new education models designed to attract and support emerging professionals. The event concluded with a leadership panel featuring Magriet Raxworthy and Bronwyn Heys, facilitated by Simon Rountree, focusing on maintaining standards while adapting to disruption.

The Summit reinforced the central role of associations in supporting professions, highlighting the importance of governance, clear pathways, and ongoing adaptation. 

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Three female CEOs serving the associations sector for purpose and impact

Under the governance and guidance of their boards, association CEOs are leading organisations that influence professions, industries and causes, shape policy and deliver meaningful outcomes for communities.

While their career paths differ, CEOs Eithne Irving, Helen White and Leigh-anne Shannon reflect a shared commitment to purpose, people and long-term impact.

A sector driven by advancing the mission

For many leaders, the appeal of the association sector lies in its objectives. Unlike commercial organisations, associations exist to serve members while contributing to a broader public good.

“What draws many of us to the associations sector, and what keeps us here, is purpose,” says Eithne Irving, CEO of the Royal Australasian College of Dental Surgeons. “Along with the Board, you’re shaping a profession’s future, supporting its people, and contributing to public good.”

It’s a sentiment shared by Helen White, CEO of the Duke of Edinburgh’s International Award Australia. “We spend around one third of our waking life at work, so it is important to make it count,” she says. “Each day I am working to incrementally improve someone’s life outcome.”

That sense of advancing a mission is echoed by Leigh-anne Shannon, CEO of Internal Medicine Society of Australia and NZ, whose career has been deeply rooted in not-for-profit work. “What has consistently drawn me to this sector is the impact,” says Ms Shannon. “Working in the for-purpose space provides a clear connection between the work you do and the outcomes you’re trying to achieve for members or the broader community.”



Non-linear pathways to leadership

The journey to CEO in the associations sector is rarely straightforward. Leaders often arrive via diverse and non-linear career paths.

Leigh-anne Shannon’s experience reflects a varied trajectory, beginning in public service and spanning local and global association roles.

“Even in my first roles out of university, working on youth programmes in Canberra, that sense of achieving outcomes for society was always there,” says Ms Shannon.

“My pathway hasn’t been linear,” Eithne Irving says. “It’s been shaped by working at the intersection of healthcare, policy and professional standards.”

Helen White’s early career took a different direction, starting in the FMCG corporate sector as a brand manager before transitioning into not-for-profit leadership.

Advancing your cause and helping members

Association and charity CEOs operate in complex environments, balancing the needs of members, boards, regulators and the broader community.

For Leigh-anne Shannon, delivering value to members is central to navigating that complexity. “At the centre of everything the Board and I do is to focus on giving members what they want, and what they need,” she says, pointing to initiatives such as a digital learning hub that significantly increased engagement and renewal rates.

Ms Shannon highlights the importance of collaboration in resource-constrained environments. “Working with limited resources means you have to be creative, and strong networks can be leveraged to deliver meaningful outcomes,” she says.

Eithne Irving says “One of the defining challenges of leading in the associations’ sector is balancing diverse and sometimes competing stakeholder expectations. Navigating that requires clarity and a commitment to transparency.”

Helen White, who has recently worked as CEO for health and youth peak bodies, says leadership is closely tied to impact, particularly in supporting young people through the Duke of Edinburgh’s International Award. “The framework is more relevant now than ever,” says Ms White. “It builds connection and community, and develops essential human skills like resilience, adaptability and self-belief.”

Gender equity in associations

The association sector has made progress in gender representation, particularly across the workforce, but challenges remain at the most senior levels.

L-R: Leigh-anne Shannon, Eithne Irving and Helen White

“Many associations now have strong female representation across their workforce,” says Eithne Irving. “However, when you look at CEO positions and board leadership, the picture is still uneven.”

While Leigh-anne Shannon notes the growing visibility of women in leadership, she also emphasises the importance of sustained support systems. “Having a network of trusted peers offers real-time support, a sounding board when you need it, and a sense that you’re not navigating everything on your own,” says Ms Shannon.

Ms Irving adds that the conversation has shifted in recent years. “Gender equity is no longer treated as a secondary issue. It’s increasingly recognised as fundamental to good governance and organisational performance.”

Helen White notes that while gender equity on boards is improving, there is still a long way to go. “Some professions have an understandable predominance of one gender, such as in my last role at the Australian College of Midwives, as midwifery is a 98% female profession, however it is critically important that Boards move towards gender equity.”

Evolving leadership capabilities

Leadership in the association sector requires more than technical expertise. Strategic thinking, adaptability and strong interpersonal skills are essential. CEOs need to work with their governing Board, their staff, members and numerous stakeholders.

Helen White emphasises authenticity. “Be authentic and build trust throughout your career,” says Ms White. “It is important to practice generosity.”

“One of the most significant shifts is moving from a technical focus into a strategic leadership position,” says Eithne Irving. “You step away from being the person with all the answers and instead create the conditions for others to succeed.”

Leigh-anne Shannon reinforces continuous learning. “One of the biggest lessons for me as CEO has been that you’re always learning,” she says.

“Being open to new ideas and learning from others and the Board has made a real difference in how I approach challenges and opportunities.”

Advice for future leaders

Leigh-anne Shannon encourages leaders to invest in relationships and resilience. “The people around you will support and guide you,” she says. “Having the space to recharge will help you become more effective and resilient.”

Helen White highlights the value of diverse experiences. “It is often the experiences you have and skills you learn early on in your career that shape you as a leader,” she says. “I would recommend to find a mentor to advise you as you progress throughout your career.”

“Be intentional about why you want to lead,” Eithne Irving says.

“Leadership brings opportunity, but also complexity and responsibility.”

In conclusion, Eithne Irving, Helen White and Leigh-anne Shannon underscore a simple but enduring idea: being CEO is not only about guiding organisations, but about creating lasting value for the professions and communities they serve. 



Three Decades of Moving Ideas Forward

Discover More



Association Membership and Services Survey findings released for 2026

Associations Forum surveyed 216 Australian associations on membership matters. The results of the 2026 Association Membership and Services Survey provide clear indicators and trends to associations to consider in their operations.

Membership and member services are at the core of associations, with the ongoing challenge of delivering offerings that members find highly valuable or essential. Associations Forum has conducted this survey for 17 years to develop an understanding of the services offered by a wide range of associations and charities and establish benchmarks for the sector.

Some of the key findings include:

- ◇ On average, associations are welcoming new members at an encouraging 12.7%. However, at the same time, attrition is sitting at 9%. Growth is happening, but so is churn.
- ◇ Budget restraints are the clear number one reason why members do not renew. Members are weighing up every dollar, and associations need to prove the return on that investment.
- ◇ Email remains the most preferred way to communicate with members, but many tell us they get too many emails. That tells us relevance matters more than frequency.

The survey is FREE for members or can be purchased for \$200 (NFP organisations only).

Contact the team at info@associations.net.au

Associations Salary Survey 2026 to provide benchmarking insights for NFP sector

Associations Forum has developed the Associations Salary Survey to provide membership organisations with a practical benchmarking resource to support informed remuneration decision-making.

Associations Forum is releasing the Associations Salary Survey 2026 this May. This is the 17th edition containing valuable information to equip board members and senior managers with up-to-date remuneration practices across not-for-profit (NFP) organisations, with a particular focus on membership-based associations.

This is a comprehensive survey across 14 positions, each broken down by location, industry, membership base and size of NFP. The survey results can assist both employers and their employees by providing tangible data they can refer to in remuneration review meetings.

Attraction and retention strategies used by organisations are also analysed in this survey along with the frequency of performance and salary reviews.

The 2026 Associations Salary Survey can be purchased for \$300 (Members) or \$600 (NFP organisations only) by contacting info@associations.net.au



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The Mid-Year Boardroom Reset: What Association Leaders Should Do Next

As boards head into the second half of the year, many are reassessing a critical question: is our agenda keeping pace with the demands of modern governance?

A new report from the OnBoard Governance Advisory Council brings together perspectives from six senior advisors across cybersecurity, healthcare, not-for-profit leadership, government relations, and global governance. Each was asked what boards are already underestimating and will regret not addressing sooner.

Their responses highlight a clear shift already reshaping board priorities in 2026:

- ◇ **Strategy is being pushed aside**
Expanding compliance and AI responsibilities are consuming board time, leaving less room for long-term direction and mission alignment.
- ◇ **AI governance remains fragmented**
Boards, executives, and implementation teams are still operating in silos, creating gaps in oversight, accountability, and opportunity.
- ◇ **Leading boards are staying visible and engaged**
In a more complex external environment, high-performing boards are actively supporting their CEOs and strengthening communication with stakeholders.

- ◇ **A practical playbook for the remainder of the year**

The report outlines practical actions across three timeframes: immediate priorities, the next two quarters, and the remainder of the year.

For associations, where governance must balance purpose, accountability, and member expectations, these shifts are already impacting how boards operate. The difference is no longer awareness, but how quickly boards respond.

This report provides a grounded view of where governance is heading, and what actions boards can take now to stay ahead.



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Role of courts regarding aggrieved members

Disputes between members and their associations are as old as the association form itself. Three recent decisions handed down by Australian courts offer a timely reminder of where the courts will intervene in association governance, and where they will not.

The court is not an ombudsman

The case of *Black v Gold Coast Pickleball Association Inc* [2025] QCA 236 explored the limits of judicial intervention. Mr Black, a former member of the Gold Coast Pickleball Association, sought various declarations and orders including:

- ♦ a declaration that the constitution adopted in 2021 be declared invalid and that an inquiry be initiated into the adoption of the constitution, and
- ♦ for various people to produce affidavits containing admissions about their conduct.

The court upheld summary judgment against Mr Black on every claim. As the Court put it, the “judicial function is distinct from the investigative function of the executive”. It cannot compel anyone to admit or confess something and cannot order an investigation simply because a member would find one satisfying. Courts decide disputes of law and fact; they do not conduct inquiries into the affairs of voluntary organisations on a member’s request. Where there is no live legal controversy, there is no role for the court to play.

Courts expect specific allegations, not general gripes

In a series of cases involving Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand (CAANZ), one of their then members, Mr Jaworski, became frustrated with how the organisation was being run. Over many years he raised concerns about four main things:

- ♦ Board refusal to put 38 member requisition motions to the 2020 AGM,
- ♦ Members voting to amend the by-laws to raise the requisition threshold from 10 to 100 members in 2021,
- ♦ Alleged unauthorised directors’ remuneration since 2015, and
- ♦ Alleged “untrue and unfair” financial reports not complying with accounting standards.

Rather than suing CAANZ directly himself, Mr Jaworski asked the court to order CAANZ to fund him to bring legal action against the board members on CAANZ’s behalf. The court dismissed his request.

The court found several flaws in Mr Jaworski’s case:

- ♦ He did not identify which directors or officers had done anything wrong, instead treating everyone involved over a decade as collectively responsible.
- ♦ Even if blocking the 2020 motions was mistaken, that alone did not show individual breaches of duty, particularly where legal advice was followed.
- ♦ The 2021 by-law change was held to be valid, properly explained to members, and approved by a strong majority; arguing that it made member motions harder to propose did not establish misconduct.
- ♦ Claims about directors’ pay failed because the payments were made under valid member resolutions and likely defensible.
- ♦ Finally, the audited financial statements showed no non-compliance, making litigation against individual directors neither sensible nor proportionate.

Many of the things Mr Jaworski was unhappy about were things he could have challenged himself, as a member, years earlier, but he hadn’t acted quickly enough, and delay had weakened his position considerably. The court ordered Mr Jaworski to pay CAANZ’s costs of approximately \$115,000. Undeterred and without paying those costs, Mr Jaworski filed fresh proceedings in his own name on essentially the same underlying conduct. The court stayed the new proceedings until the outstanding costs were paid, finding them to be an abuse of process.

Courts may fix procedural errors

In the matter of *Wildlife Information Rescue and Education Service Limited* [2026] NSWSC 145, WIRES sought orders to validate its conversion from an incorporated association to a company limited by guarantee amid some irregularities (e.g an unapproved constitution and incomplete member register). The case follows a period of turmoil and infighting at WIRES after it had received more than \$100 million in donations during the 2019-20 bushfires.

Two affected individual members were joined as defendants. They did not oppose the orders sought by WIRES but they did seek some conditions including revised audited accounts, ACNC notification, AGM disclosure, and an invitation to lapsed members to rejoin, and for certain directors to step down and a new election to be conducted. The court granted orders with the conditions but rejected their demand for director resignations and elections as beyond scope. The court found that there was no logical link to the case’s main issue which was fixing the irregularities in the company conversion. The internal board elections are a matter to be dealt with under WIRES’ new constitution. The court made no finding of dishonesty against the WIRES board; to the contrary, it accepted they acted on legal advice, albeit wrong advice. If an association has made a procedural mistake, the court can correct that mistake. In this particular case, the court’s job was narrow: fix the legal problem before it, not do a broad investigation into everything that had gone wrong inside WIRES.

What these cases mean for boards and members

Taken together, the three cases make clear that courts will intervene only where real legal wrongs exist, such as procedural irregularities, breaches of the constitution, or the improper denial of membership rights. They will not act as governance watchdogs or pursue claims lacking a firm legal basis.

For boards, the lesson is to comply with your own constitution, keep members properly informed, and remedy mistakes openly and promptly. For members, the courts can protect your rights, but litigation is slow, costly, and must rest on a clear legal entitlement. Before suing, consider whether internal mechanisms such as general meetings, requisitions, and other democratic processes offer a more practical way to resolve concerns. ☞

Disclaimer: This article provides summarised information for general knowledge only. It does not constitute legal advice and should not be relied upon as such. Circumstances vary, so please consult a legal professional for guidance on your specific situation.

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Naomi Walsh is President of Chartered Accountants ANZ

Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand (CA ANZ) has appointed Naomi Walsh as President,

succeeding Grant Ellis at the conclusion of his term.

Ms Walsh steps into the role following her service as Vice President, bringing extensive experience across audit, governance and professional leadership. Matthew Green has been named Vice President for Australia, while Julia Fink continues as Vice President for New Zealand. The leadership transition reflects CA ANZ's ongoing focus on strengthening global engagement, upholding professional standards, and supporting members through a period of regulatory change and technological disruption. 



Australian Computer Society new President is Beau Tydd

Australian Computer Society (ACS) has elected Beau Tydd as President, succeeding Helen McHugh.

A long-standing member of the organisation, Tydd has previously served in senior leadership roles including Queensland Branch Chair and brings more than two decades of experience across the technology sector. His appointment comes at a time of rapid digital transformation, with a focus on strengthening the ICT profession, supporting skills development, and advancing Australia's digital economy. ACS said the leadership transition reinforces its commitment to professional standards and industry collaboration. 



Actuaries Institute confirms Scott Reeves as President

Actuaries Institute, the professional body for actuaries in Australia, has confirmed Scott Reeves as President, as part of its leadership succession process. Mr Reeves brings a strong background in financial services and risk management, having served in senior volunteer and governance roles within the Institute. His presidency comes as the profession expands its influence in areas such as climate risk, data analytics, and emerging technologies. Mr Reeves will focus on strengthening the relevance of actuarial expertise and supporting members in a rapidly evolving risk and regulatory environment.' 



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Why Associations Choose Moreton Hire: Sustainable, Reliable, Designed to Last



In an era where sustainability, governance, and brand reputation matter more than ever, associations are increasingly seeking partners who reflect their values.

Moreton Hire has positioned itself as a trusted hire partner for organisations that prioritise quality, responsibility, and long term impact, taking a clear and deliberate stand against fast furniture. Fast furniture, characterised by low cost, poorly made items designed for short term use, contributes significantly to landfill waste and environmental harm. Moreton Hire was an early adopter of a different approach. Instead of disposability, the business made a conscious decision to invest in durable, well crafted furniture that can be used repeatedly without compromising safety, aesthetics, or sustainability. For associations hosting conferences, member events, exhibitions, or forums, this commitment delivers tangible benefits. High quality furniture not only looks professional and elevates the event experience, but it also aligns with the environmental and ethical standards many associations are expected to uphold. Moreton Hire carefully selects products built to withstand frequent use, reducing the need for constant replacement and minimising unnecessary waste. Sustainability at Moreton Hire extends beyond durability alone. The company partners exclusively with vetted manufacturers that meet strict environmental and safety standards. This includes furniture

made with FSC certified timber, recyclable materials, and responsible manufacturing processes. Every product is selected with user safety and environmental accountability in mind, an important consideration for associations managing risk, compliance, and member wellbeing. By extending product lifecycles and reducing reliance on disposable furnishings, Moreton Hire actively supports a circular economy model. This means fewer resources consumed, less waste sent to landfill, and a smaller environmental footprint for every event. Associations can confidently engage a hire partner knowing their choice supports broader sustainability goals without sacrificing style or functionality. Moreton Hire's curated range offers contemporary, versatile solutions suitable for everything from large scale conferences to intimate networking events. The result is a seamless, professional presentation that reflects positively on the association and its values. For associations seeking a hire partner that understands responsibility, longevity, and quality, and delivers on all three, Moreton Hire offers more than furniture. It offers peace of mind. **Ethically manufactured solutions for hire start with Moreton Hire.** 



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Michael Guerin appointed CEO of NFF



The National Farmers' Federation has appointed **MICHAEL GUERIN** as CEO. Mr Guerin brings significant leadership experience, having served as Acting CEO of NSW Farmers and previously as CEO of AgForce. He will lead the national peak body representing Australian farmers, focusing on agricultural advocacy, policy reform and industry sustainability. Mr Guerin's appointment reinforces the National Farmers' Federation's commitment to strong representation and strategic leadership across the agricultural sector. 

Helen White from ACM to lead Duke of Ed Award



The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award - Australia has appointed **HELEN WHITE** as CEO, following her departure as CEO of the Australian College of Midwives after four years. During her tenure, she advanced national reforms including professional indemnity insurance for homebirth and expanded access to key services. She succeeds long-serving CEO Peter Kaye AM. Mia Dhillon has since been appointed CEO of ACM, bringing a strong focus on workforce development and sector leadership. 

Lykouras replaces Fox at Stockbrokers & Investment Advisers



Stockbrokers and Investment Advisers Association has announced the appointment of **MARIA LYKOURAS** as new CEO to lead the national peak body. As incoming leader, Ms Lykouras will oversee strategic advocacy, regulatory engagement and member services across Australia's stockbroking and investment advisory sector. Ms Lykouras follows the successful 6-year tenure of Judith Fox who previously was in senior management at Governance Institute of Australia. 

Mark Nevin to lead Optometry Australia



Optometry Australia has appointed **MARK NEVIN** as its new CEO. Mr Nevin will lead the national professional body representing optometrists, with responsibility for strategic direction, advocacy and member engagement. The appointment comes as the organisation continues to focus on health policy reform, workforce sustainability and improved access to eye care services. Mr Nevin brings executive leadership experience to the role and will guide Optometry Australia through its next phase of growth and sector influence. 

Peter Malouf is CEO of AIDA



Australian Indigenous Doctors' Association has welcomed **DR PETER MALOUF** as its new CEO. He will lead the organisation's work supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander doctors and medical students across Australia. Dr Malouf's appointment strengthens the association's commitment to Indigenous leadership, health equity and culturally safe healthcare systems. He will oversee advocacy, member engagement and strategic initiatives aimed at improving health outcomes for First Nations communities. 

Katie Lyndon replaces Danielle Smith at ESSA



Exercise & Sports Science Australia (ESSA) has announced the official appointment of **KATIE LYNDON** as CEO. Ms Lyndon has led ESSA as Interim CEO in recent months with clarity and momentum. Outgoing CEO is Danielle Smith who strengthened ESSA's advocacy profile and expanded engagement with members and key stakeholders. 

Brewers Association CEO Amanda Watson resigns



Brewers Association of Australia has announced the resignation of its CEO, **AMANDA WATSON**, who is stepping down to pursue new professional opportunities. During her tenure, Ms Watson strengthened engagement across government and industry and advanced key policy outcomes, including work on beer excise reform. Her departure comes with the organisation in a strong strategic position, as the board begins the process of appointing new leadership. 

John Ackerman is CEO of Seafood Industry Australia



Seafood Industry Australia has appointed **DR JOHN ACKERMAN** as CEO. Dr Ackerman brings more than 30 years of experience across fisheries, aquaculture, trade, agricultural diplomacy and peak-body governance. He will lead the national peak body representing Australia's seafood sector, overseeing policy advocacy, industry development and stakeholder engagement. His extensive expertise positions Seafood Industry Australia to advance sustainable growth and strengthen its engagement with government and international markets. 

COSBOA new CEO is Skye Cappuccio



The Council of Small Business Organisations Australia has appointed **SKYE CAPPUCCIO** as its new CEO. Ms Cappuccio brings extensive leadership experience to the role, having previously served as CEO of Optometry Australia. Her appointment comes at a pivotal time for Australia's small business sector, with COSBOA focused on advocacy, policy reform and strengthening support for its members. Ms Cappuccio is expected to play a key role in advancing the organisation's strategic priorities. 

Louise Hardy to lead Arthritis Australia



Arthritis Australia has appointed **LOUISE HARDY** as CEO following her tenure as Interim CEO. Ms Hardy brings more than a decade of experience in policy and advocacy, alongside a strong track record in strategic delivery and stakeholder engagement. During her interim leadership, Ms Hardy guided Arthritis Australia through its milestone anniversary year, launched its first Reconciliation Action Plan and strengthened research and policy partnerships, positioning the organisation for continued growth and impact. 

Luke Achterstraat appointed CEO of CHIA NSW



Community Housing Industry Association New South Wales has appointed **LUKE ACHTERSTRAAT** as CEO. Mr Achterstraat, the former CEO of COSBOA, will lead the peak body representing community housing providers across the state, focusing on policy advocacy, sector growth and stakeholder collaboration. Mr Achterstraat will guide the Community Housing Industry Association New South Wales in advancing sustainable housing solutions and strengthening the voice of community housing organisations. 

Dried Fruits Australia appoints Justin Lane as CEO



Dried Fruits Australia has appointed **JUSTIN LANE** as its new CEO, ushering in a fresh phase of leadership for the national dried grape industry. Mr Lane brings industry knowledge and a focus on innovation, sustainability, and grower support. His appointment comes at a time of growth and opportunity, with an emphasis on strengthening collaboration, advancing research, and enhancing the global competitiveness of Australia's dried fruit sector. 

Will Golsby appointed CEO of CCIWA



The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia has appointed **WILL GOLSBY** as CEO. Mr Golsby joins the organisation with extensive leadership experience in advocacy, policy and membership strategy. Mr Golsby's appointment marks a new chapter for the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia as it strengthens its voice on behalf of the state's business community. 

GSA welcomes new CEO, Michael Carpenter



General Surgeons Australia has appointed **MICHAEL CARPENTER** as its inaugural CEO, marking a new chapter for the organisation. Mr Carpenter brings more than 25 years of leadership experience across health regulation, accreditation, and professional associations. Joining from Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency, he is recognised for driving policy reform and organisational transformation, positioning GSA to strengthen advocacy, training standards, and support for surgeons nationwide. 

CE Women appoints Lisa Annese as CEO



Chief Executive Women has appointed **LISA ANNESE** as its next CEO. Ms Annese will lead the influential network of senior women leaders committed to advancing gender equity in Australian business and public life. She brings extensive experience in advocacy and organisational leadership to the role. Her appointment signals continued momentum for Chief Executive Women's work promoting inclusive leadership, representation and systemic change across corporate and community sectors. 

Mia Dhillon appointed CEO of ACM



MIA DHILLON has been appointed Chief Executive Officer of the Australian College of Midwives (ACM) in 2026, following her tenure as General Manager, Health Care Solutions at APNA. She brings extensive experience in health, membership and not-for-profit leadership. ACM said Ms Dhillon's appointment reflects strong sector knowledge and understanding of workforce challenges facing midwives. She will lead the organisation into its next chapter, focusing on advocacy, member services reform. 

Novotel Melbourne Airport hosts 2025 Association Awards™ Dinner

At Novotel Melbourne Airport, associations receive exceptional events with confidence,



as showcased by the 2025 Association Awards™ Dinner. Welcoming Australia's association leaders in November 2025, this prestigious evening brought industry professionals together to celebrate excellence across organisations and individuals, creating a memorable atmosphere of connection and inspiration.

From the moment they arrive, guests experience seamless and sophisticated service, with every detail thoughtfully delivered to reflect the importance of your event. Contemporary event spaces provide the perfect backdrop for vibrant networking and celebration, ensuring every occasion feels both elevated and effortless.

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AI Skills Readiness Index launched by Survey Matters

Survey Matters's AI Skills Readiness Index gives associations a clear, evidence based view



of how prepared their profession is to work with AI, where capability gaps exist, and where targeted upskilling will have the greatest impact.

Survey Matters is an experienced research and strategic insights agency which works with professional and industry associations to provide robust workforce and skills data that supports confident decision making when it matters most.

"As AI, automation and structural change reshape the workforce and place pressure on professional roles, associations are increasingly asked to protect standards, support members and futureproof their professions, often without the data needed to do so with confidence" said Brenda Mainland, Managing Director of Survey Matters.

"Our work supports associations to move beyond anecdote and assumption. Through workforce surveys, skills assessments and labour market analysis, we deliver credible, independent evidence on how roles are changing, where the skills gaps are, and which capabilities will matter most in the years ahead" said Ms Mainland.

"This insight enables associations to advocate effectively, design targeted professional development, and strengthen career pathways, particularly for early and mid-career professionals navigating change." 

Nexia Sydney webinar demonstrates how plans build long-term value

Nexia Sydney's recent From Vision to Value webinar reinforced that long-term value



is built through early, deliberate preparation rather than last-minute decisions. While focused on business exits, the insights strongly resonate for associations planning leadership transitions, strategic partnerships or future mergers.

Speakers from Nexia, a major accounting, tax and advisory firm, emphasised the importance of defining a clear vision early, so organisations understand what success looks like before entering major change. Strong governance, credible leadership and well-documented operations were highlighted as foundations for stakeholder confidence. High-quality, timely financial reporting enables informed decision-making, reduces risk and strengthens organisational resilience during periods of scrutiny.

Proactive risk management is also critical, including addressing governance gaps, undocumented agreements, people-related exposures and compliance issues well ahead of any transition. Ultimately, sustainable value is driven by repeatable income streams, capable management teams and alignment between strategy, operations and financial information.

Nexia works closely with associations to support governance, risk management and strategic planning. Contact your local Nexia team to discuss how we can help your organisation plan with confidence.

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Flexible rewards elevate association events at Park Hyatt Melbourne

Located in the heart of Melbourne, Park Hyatt combines sophisticated event spaces with personalised service,

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delivering seamless and memorable experiences for association gatherings of all sizes.

Park Hyatt Melbourne continues to position itself as a leading destination for association events, offering a refined setting paired with tailored experiences for planners and delegates alike. With the launch of its latest group offer, associations can now unlock greater value when hosting meetings and events at the hotel.

Designed with flexibility in mind, the initiative allows planners to select from a range of curated benefits based on their event spend, ensuring each experience is aligned to their specific needs. Available for bookings made by 30 April 2026 and events held through to 30 September 2026, the offer includes rewards such as master bill rebates, suite upgrades, wellbeing experiences and World of Hyatt Bonus Points. 

Beaumont People marks 25 years of continued commitment to Australia's associations

Celebrating a quarter century in business, Beaumont People is marking a significant milestone in its journey as one of Australia's most trusted recruitment partners. Since opening in 2001, Beaumont People has grown into a national for-purpose specialist known for connecting organisations with the people who help them thrive.

A major part of that success story has been Beaumont People's long-standing support of the associations and memberships sector. Since 2013, the team has partnered with associations across Australia to recruit professionals who not only bring the right capability, but who align with the mission, values and member focused mindset essential for success in this unique environment.

Recruiting nationally across all levels, from temporary staff and junior roles through to executive search, Beaumont People continues to support the sector with strategic recruitment that strengthens communities and amplifies impact. 



InterContinental Wellington opens new conference venue

A fully refreshed conference floor is now open for business at the InterContinental Hotel in Te Whanganui a Tara, Wellington - the capital of New Zealand.

Adjacent to the Wellington waterfront and in the heart of the central business district, the reimagined space features a state-of-the-art ballroom with all other conference venues located on a single level. This creates a seamless flow for delegates, planners, and organisers – whether it's an intimate corporate meeting or a large MICE gathering, the floor has been purpose-built to deliver exceptional versatility and ease. From the award-winning concierge team to the views and flexible meeting spaces, this five-star hotel will make your event or stay in Wellington memorable.

Hotel highlights include: an on-site restaurant -GPO and an on-site café and bar -Two Grey. There is also The Lobby Lounge for small meals, cocktails, and high tea. Associations looking to host an event in Wellington, are welcome to contact Belinda Yeo at

Belinda.Yeo@WellingtonNZ.com 

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For professional conference organisers and association leaders, confidence in the venue is everything. Confidence in delivery, confidence in the delegate experience and confidence that every detail will come together seamlessly.

That is where **Hotel Grand Chancellor Adelaide** stands apart. Located in the heart of Adelaide's CBD, this 4.5-star hotel brings together quality accommodation, flexible event spaces and experienced on-site support in one central location. For planners delivering multi-day conferences, committee meetings, gala dinners or member events, that means smoother logistics and a more connected delegate experience. With 220 guest rooms and a dedicated conference floor, the hotel is well suited to residential conferences and multi-stream programs. The Hindley Ballroom accommodates up to 420 delegates theatre style and divides into three separate spaces for parallel sessions. Additional meeting rooms with natural daylight provide flexibility for breakout sessions, workshops and executive meetings.

The venue can also incorporate displays and exhibition components, adding a further layer of sponsor exposure and delegate engagement. Hotel Grand Chancellor Adelaide continues to invest in both its facilities and service delivery, ensuring a conference experience that remains current, polished and responsive to client expectations.

Adelaide as a destination adds to the appeal, offering the benefits of a capital city without the complexity and price tag often associated with larger destinations. Easy to access, compact and welcoming, it creates a conference experience that is both practical for organisers and enjoyable for delegates.

For PCOs and association executives seeking professionalism, flexibility and genuine ease of delivery, Hotel Grand Chancellor Adelaide presents a compelling opportunity.

Learn more at hotelgrandchancelloradelaide.com.au or get in touch with the Events Team at csn@hgcadelaide.com.au 



Elevating associations and conferences through knowledge, innovation, and partnership

The Association Specialists (TAS) are Australia's partner in association management and conferences.

For more than 30 years, we've supported professional and industry bodies, not-for-profits, and member organisations to focus on what matters most: **strategy, growth, and delivering impact.**

We act as an extension of your team - **safeguarding continuity, providing creativity and expertise, and delivering measurable value for your members and stakeholders.** With experience across hundreds of associations and conferences, **we bring unmatched insight and proven systems** that help associations thrive.

Their responses highlight a clear shift already reshaping board priorities in 2026:

Our Values

- ♦ **Partnership**
Accountable, collaborative, proactive, and invested in client outcomes.
- ♦ **Trust**
Transparent, open, and always acting in members' best interests.
- ♦ **Accountability**
Consistent results through proven systems and dependable service.
- ♦ **Commitment**
Mindful of every dollar, every resource, every decision.
- ♦ **Innovation**
Bringing creativity and cross-pollinated best practice from across the sector.

Association Management

We remove the operational burden so Boards, Committees, and CEOs can focus on strategy and impact. From governance and finance to membership, communications, and events, TAS provides full-service management tailored to your needs. With us, associations gain stability, continuity, and the confidence that comes with expertise.

“They have always responded promptly to my requests for help. The monthly TAS activity report provided at our monthly Executive Committee people meeting, is very useful and informative.”

AD (Tony) Gillett
Boutique Financial Planning Principals Association Inc Secretary

“Your involvement continues to springboard the RMIA forward, allowing us to reach new heights. May 2025 for the RMIA Annual Conference.”

Simon Levy GAICD, RMIA
Chief Executive Officer & Company Secretary –
RMIA (Risk Management Institute of Australasia)

Conference Management

Conferences are more than events - they're milestones for growth, connection, and reputation. TAS has delivered over 500 conferences, blending proven systems with creative thinking to attract sponsorship, grow attendance, and deliver memorable experiences that leave a legacy.

TAS eLearning Academy

Strengthening leadership from within, the TAS eLearning Academy offers online, on-demand courses for Boards and Executives of associations. Covering essentials such as governance, finance, and risk, these practical modules build the confidence and skills leaders need to guide their organisations into the future.

“Insulation Australasia was fortunate to be able to utilise The Association Specialists (TAS) management services for over 12 years. TAS's professionalism, reliability and customer focus has been of the highest level. They have performed their duties with diligence, dedication and simplicity. We have no hesitation in recommending The Association Specialists to others.”

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Why Choose TAS?

- ♦ **An extension of your team**
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- ♦ **Expertise without comparison**
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- ♦ **Continuity and confidence**
We safeguard knowledge and systems, ensuring resilience no matter how leadership changes.
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An aerial photograph of the Perth city skyline at sunset. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm, golden glow over the city. The city of Perth is visible, with numerous skyscrapers and buildings. The Swan River flows through the city, with several boats visible on the water. In the foreground, there is a large green park area with trees. The text "YOUR DREAM BUSINESS EVENT DESTINATION" is overlaid on the image in white, bold, sans-serif font. The word "DREAM" is the largest and most prominent.

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