

Agents are in safe hands

ALPA members take up the challenge

BY HAYLEY WARDEN

UNDER the guidance of Australian Livestock and Property Agents Association's chief executive officer Peter Baldwin and his dedicated team, the professional development of agents, as well as encouraging younger people into the profession and raising the profile of its valuable female members, remain key goals for the organisation.

Agency, Mr Baldwin says, is a people business and members love to share ideas and encourage each other.

"We deliver purposeful and contemporary training and mentorship, cultivate and refine techniques in auctioneering, wool marketing, and production and intelligent property marketing," he said.

As the trusted national peak industry body for livestock and property agents, member engagement is a top priority.

"Our members love to share ideas, encourage one another and they feel that ALPA provides a wonderful environment for people to network, share similar ideals and successes and cultivate a genuine fellowship," Mr Baldwin said.

"We receive very positive feedback through ALPA industry awareness days, national and state young auctioneer competitions and auctioneer schools.

"These special events provide an invaluable means of education, professional development, refinement of knowledge, legislative updates and simply bringing together members and staff

from far and wide who don't ordinarily get to meet face-to-face due to distance."

Mr Baldwin said there is inestimable value in uniting members from across Australia who share the same traditions and philosophies of safeguarding the agency profession and securing its future.

"Essentially ALPA is the template for old core values, with a steely determination to advance the cause of members and their families," he said.

"We have partnered with outstanding sponsors, supporters and suppliers who welcome members to engage with them to advance and secure their business operations and receive guidance in decision-making.

"These partners add a profound dimension to our operations: to protect their valued clients' livestock against injury or loss, members are eligible to participate in the ALPA Stock Transit Insurance Scheme, they are eligible for fleet discounts on selected motor vehicles with significant cost savings, they can safeguard their cash flow and business by being eligible to join StockInsure, the livestock buyers default insurance scheme, as well as accessing professional indemnity insurance at a special member's rate."

Drought, fire, flood and now COVID-19 have all impacted on primary producers and their communities.

Mr Baldwin said producers will always look for someone they trust and can assist them to navigate through the mire when times are tough.

"Trust, security, longevity



TRAINING: Livestock and property agent Sarah Packer was selected to compete in the ALPA Queensland Young Auctioneers Competition and is one of many agents to benefit from ALPA's education and professional development.

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ALPA chief executive officer Peter Baldwin

and informed advice are key pillars within our membership," he said.

"The hallmark of ALPA's members is an unstinting and instinctive discipline of backing clients and always putting their interests first.

"This may be through the security of payment (using del credere) for their livestock, underwriting finance, offering prudent advice on restocking, breeding, the right time to buy and sell, as well as instituting the best method of sale such as saleyards, special feature sales,

online interface, in the paddock, over the hook or live export.

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Mr Baldwin believes the industry faces both traditional and emerging challenges.

"The cost of opening and running a business compounded by urban drift and migration of young rural folk

to cities makes it difficult to recruit and integrate talent, so succession planning is vital," he said.

"The impact of irrational, poor and uninformed decision-making among regulators and legislators is damaging to our industry and frankly a constant headache.

"Globalisation, international politics, continuous changes in technology, the inability to access it consistently and effectively and fear of being left behind also remain a challenge."

With that in mind, ALPA is always looking for new opportunities to reduce the impacts of these challenges. Professional development of its members is at the core of ALPA's focus into the future.

"Agents work extremely long hours so any training and professional development has to satisfy licensing and compliance, but at the same time identify new and beneficial ideas which will positively benefit their busi-

nesses," Mr Baldwin said.

"The recent changes to CPD training requirements in NSW and the proposed introduction of CPD into Queensland has required us to investigate training opportunities that meet the licensing requirements, but more importantly are of relevance to members that can be applied directly into the effective running of their businesses."

ALPA is also embarking on the development of a new website as a go-to resource for its members.

"To complement the website we have rolled out a refreshed weekly emailed newsletter format that has received positive reviews from our member readership," Mr Baldwin said.

"This will continue to evolve as we dovetail into the new website and also draw upon the engagement we experience across our social media platforms: Facebook, Twitter and Instagram."

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