

A changing of the guard

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“The times they are a changing”, Bob Dylan once wrote and sang with gusto. The lyrics are certainly apt to describe the unprecedented number of changes occurring at the helm of most industry associations in Western Australia this year.

Most of these associations have enjoyed incredible stability over the last decade with their executive directors or CEOs, but this year, for whatever reason, it is very different. Some might even describe the phenomenon as extraordinary.

Here’s a summary of the changes that have taken place or taking place:

- Chris Rodwell has replaced Deidre Willmott as the CEO of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry.
- Carl Copeland has taken over from Garry Itzstein as the Executive Director of the Electrical Contractors Association.
- Sandra Brewer has replaced Lino

Iacomella as the CEO of the Property Council.

- Paul Everingham has taken over from Reg Howard-Smith as CEO of the Chamber of Minerals and Energy.
- Andy Graham has replaced Jeff Miller as the CEO of the Civil Contractors Federation.
- John Dastlik has been appointed Regional Executive Director of the Housing Industry Association until such time as a replacement is found for John Gelavis.
- Allison Hailes has resigned as CEO of the Urban Development Institute of Australia.
- Michael Woodhams has resigned as State Manager of the Australian Institute of Architects.
- John Gelavis has been appointed to take over from myself as Executive Director of the Master Builders Association when I retire later this year.

In addition to these private sector movements, the public sector has also encountered some significant changes with:

- Lex McCulloch resigned as WorkSafe WA Commissioner and was replaced by Ian Munns.
- Ken Bowron took over from Peter Gow as Building Commissioner following Mr



John Gelavis.



John Dastlik.



Allison Hailes.

- Gow’s retirement.
- Grahame Searle resigned as Director General of the Department of Communities.
- Jodi Cant replaced Anne Nolan as Director General of the Department of Finance, Building Management and Works following Ms Nolan’s retirement.

Each of these senior positions are important to each of the organisations involved. It will take some time for the new appointments to settle in, to get an appreciation of the organisation’s culture and to come to terms with the policy and other priorities being pursued.

Of course, a fresh approach and revitalisation of any organisation is a good thing which should be embraced with enthusiasm and confidence. Each of the new CEOs will have a busy time coming up to speed with all the regulatory changes being proposed by the State Government.

Some of these reforms have the potential to be ‘gamechangers for businesses. Take, for

example, security of payment, occupational safety and health, planning reforms, housing indemnity insurance, industrial relations and the Jobs Act.

Just as important will be the Federal Election some time before May 18 next year. If the polls and media commentary are to be believed, a change in government looms likely, which will mean more regulatory changes and adjustments required by the building industry and other businesses.

Whichever way you look at it, there are many changes ahead which our new list of CEOs will need to manage on behalf of their respective members.

Developing a good rapport between kindred and like-minded organisations will also be helpful in dealing with common challenges.

Likewise, developing a strong and honest relationship between the new CEO and his or her board will go a long way in determining the success of the organisation and their transition into the future.