



ACCA Australia and New Zealand review 2004



ACCA

As the profession evolves accountants need communication and business acumen as well as technical expertise



Message from the chair of ACCA Australia and New Zealand – Allan Drew FCCA

I am pleased to present the *ACCA Australia and New Zealand* review for 2004. In this review you will find a summary of some of the key developments and events for members and students which took place during the year. In addition, the review illustrates the extent to which *ACCA Australia and New Zealand* has progressed in increasing its influence and stature.

In 2004, three CFO Forums were organised by ACCA – two in Sydney and one in Melbourne exclusively for chief financial officers of Top 100 corporations. I had the pleasure of attending the Sydney lunch meetings, the first of which was addressed by James Strong, chairman of Woolworths and chaired by ACCA member Fraser MacKenzie, the CFO of Coles Myer. The speaker at the second forum in Sydney was Roger Hogan, managing editor of *CFO* magazine. These forums are sponsored and jointly organised with IBM Business Consulting Services. They focused on the theme of the changing role of CFOs and they resulted in two reports being published.

The message from the CFO discussions was clear – that accountants need first to acquire financial competencies and then develop their communication and people skills as well as business acumen. CFOs now need to consider a range of

stakeholders – managers, directors, employees, customers, investors, the community and government. They need to be focused not only the profitability of their businesses but also on regulatory measures such as CLERP 9 and Sarbanes-Oxley, the adoption of international financial reporting standards and the increased focus on corporate reputation and responsibility.

2004 was a year of celebration as well as achievement as ACCA celebrated its centenary, having been founded on 30 November 1904. The centenary year celebrations began in Hong Kong on 1 December 2003 which coincided with the appointment of a new chief executive, formerly ACCA's Asia Pacific director Allen Blewitt. Allen is an Australian from Sydney.

ACCA's theme for the centenary was "Responsibility". In February 2004, Paul Moxey, ACCA head of corporate governance and risk management, presented the findings of a research project that surveyed 20 Australian business leaders' views of responsibility in business. This report generated media coverage across the country. The presentations were held in Perth, Melbourne, Sydney and Auckland.

The CFO Forum 5 November 2004

(l to r) Colin Powell – Financial Management, Asia Pacific and ANZ, IBM Business Consulting Services, Chris Powell – CFO, Zurich Insurance and Gary Armstrong – CFO, British American Tobacco (BAT)



The theme of responsibility was naturally relevant to the *ACCA Australia and New Zealand Sustainability Reporting Awards* for 2003. The awards ceremony was held in May 2004. This was the second year the awards were offered in Australia and the first time New Zealand was included. Thirty-three reports were entered, clearly establishing ACCA's programme as the major national awards for environmental, social and sustainability reporting. The awards are sponsored by KPMG and endorsed by the New Zealand Business Council for Sustainable Development.

The Sustainability Reporting Awards received excellent media coverage with articles on sustainability reporting appearing in the *Australian Financial Review*, *Sydney Morning Herald*, *The Australian*, *Business Review Weekly* and *CFO* magazine. Sky Business Report also covered the event. It was also pleasing to see the ACCA mark in Toyota's 2003 report denoting their 2002 report won an award as an early reporter.

I began the year as vice-chair and became chair of *ACCA Australia and New Zealand* earlier than planned when Professor Barry Cooper was elected to ACCA's Council

in May. I congratulate Barry on his election to the governing body of ACCA. With over 320,000 members and students in 160 countries, ACCA is the largest and fastest growing international professional accountancy body.

I should like to thank ACCA members and students for their support and participation in 2004 and especially thank our committee members and the highly effective ACCA staff and consultants.

The strong demand for professionally qualified accountants demonstrates the accountancy profession is heading in the right direction. I look forward to *ACCA Australia and New Zealand* continuing to make progress in 2005.

To join a leading accountancy body requires a commitment to continuing professional development



Comment from the head of ACCA Australia and New Zealand – Richard Francis FCCA

ACCA published a report in October 2004 on trends in the employment of accountants in Australia. The report, compiled with the assistance of executive recruitment specialists Hays and Hitchcock & Associates, identified significant areas of skills shortages and undersupply. The report generated media coverage in the *Sydney Morning Herald* and *The Age*. Since then numerous articles covering these issues have appeared in the press. The undersupply of qualified accountants is partly due to pressures on corporations from changes in corporate governance (Sarbanes-Oxley, CLERP 9) and global changes such as Australia's adoption of international financial reporting standards.

It is also clear from our discussions with recruitment consultants and employers that the professional accounting qualification is still regarded as very important for applicants aspiring to hold a senior financial position. Many accountants have used their qualification to progress into broader business roles and a number of ACCA members in Australia now hold CFO or CEO positions in large corporations.

To join a leading professional accountancy body of the standing of ACCA requires not only completion of professional examinations and relevant work experience but also a commitment to continuing professional development. This dedication by ACCA members means that ACCA itself must also have a commitment to supporting its members through the provision of a variety of services.



Among the many events we organised this year, was a series of tax reform forums with presentations by national tax experts and by ACCA head of taxation Chas Roy-Chowdhury. The forums were held in Perth, Melbourne, Brisbane and Sydney in August 2004. The deputy inspector general of taxation also participated in the Sydney event. Chas Roy-Chowdhury was quoted in a number of media articles in the *Australian Financial Review* during his visit and was interviewed by Sky Business Report.

An event titled "What the numbers don't tell you. The relevance of non-financial data for analysts" was jointly organised by ACCA and the Securities Institute of Australia in November 2004. Media coverage was gained in *CFO* magazine, *Ethical Investor* magazine and on Sky Business Report. The event was inspired by an ACCA Australia and New Zealand publication titled *The big picture – how the environment influences corporate profitability* which includes articles from over a dozen Australians known for their expertise in sustainability issues.

In 2005, we plan to organise more events and other professional development services which are such an essential part of keeping ACCA members' reputations and skills at the forefront among professionally qualified accountants.



ACCA – SUPPORTING STUDENTS

Tertiary students

ACCA exhibited at the AFAANZ (The Association of Finance and Accounting Academics in Australia and New Zealand) in Alice Springs in July. This is a leading event for Australian and New Zealand accounting academics. We also hosted stands at career fairs held at the University of New South Wales, Sydney University and UTS. Student promotions included presentations held in October, when ACCA head of education, Clare Minchington, visited universities in Sydney and Melbourne to develop better relations. ACCA has developed a program called *accelerate* which offers various benefits to university students who join the scheme.

The number of international students studying in Australia has increased significantly in the past two years. Many of these are potential future ACCA members. Many Australian university students will also become accountants. By promoting ACCA to students and offering them worthwhile services such as career advice we are developing their awareness and respect for our organisation. To support this aim, ACCA also provides a number of prizes at universities for best papers in accounting topics.

ACCA students

We are encouraging educational providers to provide tuition support for ACCA students. This will take time as the numbers must be adequate to offer courses. We hope also to encourage the availability of short revision courses before the ACCA exams which may be sat in most Australian and New Zealand cities.

Our office in Sydney handles a range of enquires from ACCA students. Sittings at the Sydney and Melbourne venues have noticeably increased each year.



ACCA – SUPPORTING AND ENGAGING MEMBERS

ACCA's new continuing professional development scheme, *ACCA Realise*, provides an impetus for us to increase CPD activities. We shall also be liaising with employers to accredit their professional training and development policy and programs for ACCA members.

We have described above some of the many events that took place for members. Members CPD and social meetings were held regularly in Perth, Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane and Auckland in 2004. Our centenary dinner in Sydney in October 2004 was attended by over 100 members and guests with Hays regional director, Jane Donnelly, as guest speaker.

One of our corporate objectives is to engage our growing, diverse membership base and we note the efforts of our committee members shown below for their involvement – with the vast geographical area we cover, they are essential representatives of ACCA and its members from Perth in Western Australia to Waikato, New Zealand.

It is also pleasing to note the support of ACCA members in senior positions such as Fraser MacKenzie, CFO, Coles Myer and Stephen Williams, CFO, Boeing Australia, who both attended the CFO Forums.

Centenary Celebration Dinner 15 October 2004
Jane Donnelly – regional director, Hays

The CFO Forum 28 May 2004
Fraser MacKenzie – CFO, Coles Myer

The CFO Forum 5 November 2004
Stephen Williams – CFO, Boeing Australia



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Centenary Celebration Dinner 15 October 2004

*ACCA Australia and New Zealand committee 2004 – (l to r) Martin Kelly, Simon Morris, David Mortlock, Simon Coad, Barry Cooper, Allan Drew, Malcolm Ferguson, Richard Francis, Chris Campbell and James Woodward
Not present: Jim Routledge and John Glynn.*

Centenary Celebration Dinner 15 October 2004

Philomena Leung – ACCA member

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