



# L.A. NEWS

NEWSLETTER #248, FEBRUARY 2026



## FROM THE INSTITUTE PRESIDENT, DARRELL STOPS

Dear Members,

At the outset, I would like to start by talking about New Zealand (not about the demise of “Razor” Robertson, the coach of the All Blacks), but about what AICLA is doing and the recent weather. This follows a telephone call from Mike Brooke to me regarding not mentioning New Zealand in the last edition of LA News. Mike also had a crack at me for not mentioning, when we caught up in Perth last year, that I was putting my hand up to be President. Mike is a former President of the Institute who left it in a far sounder position after his tenure, with quality values, decisions, and a willingness to bring people along with him due to his passion, enthusiasm, and drive.

Trina Far is the current New Zealand Division Chair and is displaying similar values in leading the NZ Committee. This can be seen in the initiative and success of the recent breakfasts in Wellington, Auckland, Christchurch, and Tauranga prior to Christmas, as well as in the early planning for the NZ Conference in August 2026.

There was a widely publicised storm on 15/16 February 2026 in the south-east of the North Island of New Zealand. There was heavy rain and gale-force winds, with several areas recording more than 100 mm of rain in less than 24 hours, with the worst affected areas being Gisborne, Hawke’s Bay, and the Bay of Plenty. This followed widespread flooding in the Ōtorohanga District in the days prior. When speaking to Trina and asking how she was going, she just gave a wry chuckle, saying there is a bit to be done. Our thoughts are with our colleagues working in the area to stay safe, maintain composure under pressure, and continue to make a difference.

The CEO, Adrian Libke, and I had a meeting with ANZIIF in Melbourne on Tuesday 10 February 2026, with our Education Director, Glyn Lloyd, joining by Teams. Glyn, or critically Mrs Lloyd, is to be congratulated on the arrival of their most recent addition to their family. We wish them continuing patience, tolerance, and parental skills in the raising of their brood. I have expressed my admiration every time we speak. I will provide more details of the meeting once matters are finalised, but I wish to say the meeting was a success and, on a personal note, it was good to meet Katrina

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Members and guests are invited to attend the following events. For further information and to register, please click on the event.

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION
6 Mar	WA IWD Lunch	Perth
10 Mar	TAS Seminar & Networking	Hobart
12 Mar	SA/NT IWD Networking Event	Adelaide
18 Mar	QLD Breakfast Seminar	Brisbane
25 Mar	NSW/ACT Webinar	Online
26 Mar	NSW/ACT Networking Event	Sydney
2 Apr	SA/NT Privacy & AI Seminar	Adelaide
16 Apr	WA Member-Only Dinner	Perth
22 Apr	QLD Breakfast Seminar	Brisbane
12 May	ACC26 – Asia-Pacific Claims Convention	Phuket, Thailand
26 May	TAS Seminar & Networking	Hobart
Early June	SA/NT Seminar & Demonstration	Adelaide
10 June	QLD Claims Convention	Brisbane
14 July	TAS Seminar & Networking	Hobart
29 July	QLD Breakfast Seminar	Brisbane
7 Aug	SA/NT Claims Convention	Adelaide
11 Aug	TAS Seminar & Networking	Hobart
9 Sept	CC26	Sydney
Mid Sept	SA/NT Recovery Seminar	Adelaide
13 Nov	QLD End of Year Luncheon	Brisbane
Nov	SA/NT Annual Luncheon	Adelaide

Shanks, Mark Silveira, and Loren Bellino of ANZIIF

Prior to the ANZIIF meeting, the Division Chair of Victoria, Nish Chandra, and I met with Lucy Terracall and John Simpson of the Australian Insurance Law Association (AILA) in Victoria. Nish and his Committee are to be commended for the relationship between AICLA and AILA in Victoria. They liaise about events, timing, supporting each other, and holding joint events. The respect on both sides could clearly be seen at the meeting.

Speaking of success, I had the pleasure of meeting the Victorian AICLA Committee over dinner and thanked them for what they are achieving, particularly the continuing success of the Vic Awards Night in December. I mentioned the evening in an earlier edition of LA News. The Committee is fully committed to continuing to achieve this success. Credit and recognition are due to the Victorian Committee, comprising Jacquie Howard, Jon Stagg, Nat Sinclair, Tulay Tuzun, Prad Ganapathy, Atefah Karb, and Travis Kulinicz, with the Committee led by Nish Chandra as Area Chair. Regrettably, Atefah and Travis could not be there on the evening.

All members should have received a brief survey from AICLA Head Office requesting feedback on where we are at, what we do well, and, critically, what we can do better. Please provide input on what is a very straightforward survey, and we appreciate directness and honesty. If we can improve or are failing in a member's opinion, please let us know.

Speaking of membership, following a recent membership drive, we are approaching a record number of members. We encourage all members, when speaking to colleagues who are not members, to highlight the importance of education, networking opportunities and benefits, as well as what being a Chartered Loss Adjuster means in the profession. We continue to encourage members to consider joining local Divisions at the AGMs in August. New people and ideas are always welcome and are critical to our success and growth.

The final touches are being made to the Asian Claims Conference in Phuket, Thailand on 12–14 May 2026. A wide range of international and local speakers are confirmed, including FUEDI President Klaas Brand and Director of Loss Adjuster Standards for OIC, Pongpop Trisdikhun. An updated brochure regarding the conference, providing greater detail, will be sent out shortly, with early bird discounts available until 10 April 2026.

Planning is well in hand for international meetings to be held in Thailand, Vietnam, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia during May 2026. We are aware of what these meetings mean to our international members, and we greatly look forward to them each year. Each local committee will have details shortly and, on a personal note, I look forward to meeting as many people as possible in each country and at the ACC in Phuket.

As an early reminder, please save the date for the Claims Convention in Sydney on Wednesday 9 September 2026, with the event to be held at the Sofitel Wentworth. Plenty more detail will be forthcoming over the coming months as planning continues.

Finally, I look forward to Perth hosting the next Directors Meeting on Thursday 16 April 2026, with an opportunity for WA members to meet the Directors and CEO over dinner at Anzac House, Perth, in the evening. The Directors Meetings are held every April and October around Australia and in New Zealand and are an integral part of our Institute and how we operate.

**Yours in loss adjusting.**

**Darrell Stops – President – AICLA**

## AICLA MEMBER SURVEY

As highlighted by our President, this is your opportunity to help shape the future of the Institute. We're inviting all members to complete a short feedback survey and share your insights on how we can continue to grow, improve, and better support you.

The survey closes on 20 March, so don't miss your chance to have your say. It takes just five minutes to complete, and your input will make a real difference.

As a thank you for your time, you can choose to enter the draw to win one of three \$100 Visa gift cards. To go into the draw, simply provide your email address at the end of the survey (optional). Only winners will be contacted.

To access the survey and be part of shaping what comes next, [click here...](#)



## NEW AND ELEVATED MEMBERS

**Congratulations to the following new and recently elevated members:**

### NEW MEMBERS

NAME	CLASS	DIVISION
Agustinus Gunawan	Affiliate	Int. Indonesia
Vu Duc Doanh	Affiliate	Int. Vietnam
Manish Sharma	Affiliate	New South Wales
Kevser Uydassoglu	Affiliate	New South Wales
Nate Macleod	Affiliate	Queensland
Catherine Keyes	Affiliate	South Australia
Pun Kooi Wong	Affiliate	Victoria
Luke James Watson	Affiliate	Western Australia
Reza Agnesha	Provisional	Int. Indonesia
Carlanda Silja Tensta	Provisional	Int. Indonesia
Larry Lin	Provisional	New South Wales
Tom Dixon	Provisional	New Zealand
Natasha Henry	Provisional	Queensland
Gemma R Blagrove	Provisional	Victoria
Abdull Surkhodi	Provisional	Victoria
William Moon	Provisional	Western Australia

### ELEVATIONS

NAME	CLASS	DIVISION
Braden Sharma	Fellow	Queensland
Leonardo Nursalim	Associate	Int. Indonesia
Omar Al Aghbar	Associate	Int. UAE
Nguyen Thanh Tung	Associate	Int. Vietnam
Christopher Brown	Affiliate	Victoria
Mihir Koujalgi	Affiliate	Victoria
Dea Rusley	Affiliate	New South Wales

**PHUKET, THAILAND**

**SHAPING THE FUTURE OF CLAIMS IN THE ASIA PACIFIC REGION**

**AICLA ACC26**

**12-13-14 MAY 2026**

Preparations for the **Asian-Pacific Claims Convention 2026** continue to gain momentum as we look ahead to gathering at Four Points by Sheraton, Phuket, Thailand, from 12–14 May 2026. We are thrilled to see such strong early backing from our sponsors.

The Organising Committee is carefully crafting a dynamic and forward-focused program centred on this year's theme, *'Shaping the Future of Claims in the Asia-Pacific Region.'* Delegates can expect thought-provoking discussions, expert insights, and practical perspectives on the evolving landscape of claims across our region.

Building on the record-breaking success of ACC25 in Osaka, the Convention will once again unite claims professionals from across Asia, Australia, New Zealand and beyond. It continues to cement its reputation as one of the region's leading platforms for professional development, knowledge exchange, and meaningful cross-border collaboration.

The two-day program promises a vibrant Welcome Cocktail Function, comprehensive Convention sessions across Days 1 and 2, and the much-anticipated Gala Dinner, always a highlight of the event calendar.

With anticipation building, we look forward to welcoming an even greater number of delegates to beautiful Phuket for what is shaping up to be an outstanding and memorable Convention experience.

Tickets are now available **via our website**. We encourage members to secure their place early and take advantage of the early bird discount.

## WESTERN AUSTRALIA



### Thursday 12 February 2026 – Royal Perth Golf Club

The guest speaker at our most recent education breakfast seminar was Peter Jeffrey of Halliwell who gave his presentation on Maximising the Outcomes of Forensic Investigations. Peter is an accomplished Forensic Investigator with scientific qualifications and has training and experience in the fields of forensic analysis, crime scene investigation and chemistry – specialising in fire and explosion investigations since 2016. He also facilitates the provision of expert opinion and legal review services conducted nationally, and routinely provides expert opinion in the field of fire an explosion investigation and chemistry for major law firms across Australia.

There were 85 members and guests in attendance for our first event of 2026. A big thank you to Peter for his presentation which was emphatically received by the audience.

### Friday 6 March 2026 – Duxton Hotel

The third annual International Women's Day Luncheon will be held at Duxton Hotel, St Georges Tce, Perth. This year we are excited to welcome Kendall Whyte, Founder & CEO of the mental health charity, Blue Tree Project, as our keynote speaker. As of early 2026 there are over 1,500 registered blue trees across Australia as part of the project, which aims to promote mental health awareness and discussions through art.

For the first time, AICLA will be presenting the International Women's Day Award, recognising a Woman in the Insurance Sector in Western Australia for her outstanding contribution, dedication, and impact within the industry. Four finalists for the award who have been selected by the member base and associates include Rhiarne Honeybun of Bay Building Group, Alison Jobson of Aon, Kirsten Swinbourne of Major Loss Builders, and Kate Thompson of Restorx.

The WA Division would again like to thank and acknowledge our sponsors:

**PLATINUM:** MLB

**GOLD:** WA Insurance Builders, Kennedys, McLarens, Silver Wolf Projects.

## WELCOME BABY INDIE FITZROY

The WA Division would like to congratulate their Secretary, Ramona Keely on the birth of her daughter Indie Fitzroy!

Indie was born at 10:15am on 24th February weighing 8 pounds 6 ounces and measuring 51cm.



## QUEENSLAND



Queensland's first event of the year was a resounding success, bringing members together for an evening filled with fantastic food, great drinks and even better networking. We were delighted to welcome our President, Darrell Stops, who joined members at the Pig 'N' Whistle for a fun and well-attended gathering.

We extend our sincere thanks to our valued sponsors for their generous support:

**PLATINUM:** *Silver Wolf Projects*

**GOLD:** *Pirrsa, Cowan Restoration Group, Prime Ecosystem (Cotality), Ethos Building & Restoration*

Our next event marks the launch of our much-anticipated Breakfast Series, featuring Dr Adrian Grosvenor presenting on Corrosion Failures. This will also be one of our final events at the beautiful Victoria Park before it closes to make way for the Brisbane 2032 Olympic Games and a special opportunity to enjoy this iconic venue while we still can.

Excitement is also building for the Queensland Claims Convention (QCC), to be held at the Pullman Brisbane King George Square on 10 June. Your registration will include access to the half-day conference, morning tea and a networking lunch, an unmissable date on the industry calendar.

Keep an eye on our website for ticket releases, and be sure to follow AICLA QLD on LinkedIn for the latest updates and announcements.

We look forward to welcoming you at our upcoming events!

## SOUTH AUSTRALIA/ NORTHERN TERRITORY

We kicked off the year with our first networking event that was a great success! An excellent turnout from our claims colleagues who enjoyed the fun and competition that was on offer at Ballers Clubhouse. It was encouraging to see a variety of claims professionals take the opportunity to network and create new connections within the SA/NT market.

Thank you again to our sponsors for their support in making the event possible:

**GOLD:** MLA Builders

**SILVER:** AAT Group, RCC National

**BRONZE:** HPG Building Services, Steamatic

Our first seminar for the year will be held on Friday 10 April and will focus on Privacy & AI, presented by Dr Mark Giancaspro and Fraser Booth. A timely topic as regulatory scrutiny and technological advances continue to reshape the claims environment. Further details will be released shortly.

We are also pleased to confirm our Claims Convention, 'A Total Loss' will be held on Friday 7 August at the Adelaide Convention Centre. This will be a full-day event building on the momentum

## WARNING: SCAM EMAILS

We have been alerted to scam emails offering to sell attendee lists for AICLA events.

**Please note: We do not sell or share attendee lists. These messages are fraudulent.**

**Do not respond, click links, or purchase anything.**

**Delete and block the sender, and report the email to your IT team or provider.**

***Thank you for staying alert.***

and strong attendance of last year's convention focussing on all aspects of a total loss. Program details and sponsorship opportunities will be released in the coming weeks.

Your SA/NT Committee continue to work hard behind the scenes to create a calendar full of fun and educational sessions, and we would love to hear your suggestions and feedback to make sure we're delivering on the topics you want to hear about.

## NEW SOUTH WALES/ACT

We're pleased to share that the NSW/ACT committee held its first meeting of 2026, kicking off what promises to be a productive and engaging year. The team has already begun planning a strong calendar of events focused on professional development, networking, and industry knowledge-sharing. We look forward to keeping you updated as these initiatives roll out.

Up first we have an educational webinar on Proximate Cause, which will be held online on 25 March from 12:00pm – 1:00pm (AEDT). Presented by Jonathan Liberis & Jacob Cooney of Wotton Kearney, this session will explore fundamental principles, practical applications, and real-world examples relevant to our field. It's a valuable opportunity for both new and experienced practitioners to deepen their technical knowledge and we encourage all to join. To register, please [click here...](#)

For those in Sydney on 26 March, we invite you to join us for our first networking event of the year.

**WHEN:** Thursday 26 March, 5.30-8.30pm

**WHERE:** PJ O'Brien's (Grace Hotel Sydney)

**TICKETS:** \$50 members, \$150 non-members

This will be a great opportunity to reconnect with colleagues across the industry, meet new members, and strengthen professional relationships.

First release tickets are for AICLA members only and can be purchased by [clicking here...](#)

With thanks as always to our generous sponsors: Abril Building Solutions and Restorations, Ezy Projects, Construct Services, C+M Build Group, Riverwall Constructions

If you have an idea for a future educational topic or social event we'd love to hear from you.

Please contact the division with your suggestions via [nswdiv@aicla.org](mailto:nswdiv@aicla.org) so we can continue delivering sessions and events that support your professional growth and interest you.

## NON-MEMBER MAILING LIST

**Sign up here** to receive LA News and notification of upcoming events.

# LEGENDS OF LOSS ADJUSTING

*We're excited to continue our Legends of Loss Adjusting feature which was launched in our 2025 August edition of LA News.*

*Here we spotlight a distinguished member of our profession who has made a lasting contribution to the industry.*

*Through personal stories, reflections, and lessons learned, these industry leaders will share their experiences and insights, offering inspiration to both seasoned professionals and those just beginning their careers.*

*Join us as we celebrate the rich history of loss adjusting and learn from the legends who have helped shape the profession.*



**Tony Morgan**

To order a copy of Tony Morgan's book "The Art of Loss Adjusting" [click here...](#)



## Reflections on a Career in Loss Adjusting

It was over 50 years ago – 1973 to be precise – when I was working part-time in my father's insurance broking business while completing university studies, that I was enticed by a charismatic loss adjuster called Syd McDonald to join the exotic and exciting profession that he inhabited. His firm, through a series of mergers and acquisitions over the decades morphed into what is now Sedgwick in Australia.

My training ground was domestic claims, which was an invaluable place to learn basic principles. But I saw that the pathway to being entrusted with larger and more exciting work lay in gaining more knowledge and qualifications, which I worked hard at over the following years. I was on a steep learning curve and made mistakes along the way. I've shared some anecdotes and lessons learned from them in my book, "The Art of Loss Adjusting".

I am grateful for the many opportunities I have been given over the years. Firstly, in being entrusted to manage many large and complex property and business interruption claims, mainly across Australasia and the Pacific region. Secondly, in different leadership roles including a strategic season as CEO of the firm with which I have been associated for over half a century. And thirdly, for extended periods on the Boards of three professional institutes, including the Presidency of what was then the Australasian Division of the Chartered Institute of Loss Adjusters and the Presidency of ANZIIF.

One of the most fascinating claims in which I was involved, which has excited media attention for decades since,

involved the Offset Alpine Printing Company, which suffered a major fire on Christmas Eve, 1993. It spawned allegations of arson and enrichment, allegations of tax evasion through secret Swiss bank accounts involving prominent political and business figures, and a murder conviction that was subsequently overturned on appeal. Despite the speculation surrounding that claim, despite the numerous newspaper articles (and at least one book) written about it, I believe we were able to negotiate an appropriate settlement on behalf of the insurers and reinsurers involved. It is one that has stood the test of the scrutiny that has followed over the years. And it has provided rich and engaging material for many seminars and training sessions ever since.

One of the most satisfying claims I have had the privilege to manage much more recently involved an abattoir that suffered a fire leading to a property and business interruption claim in the hundreds of millions of dollars. We were under intense pressure from three levels of government, given the significance of the business's exports into global markets, the size of the workforce, and complexities arising out of the fire including the discovery of an ancient aboriginal burial site at the location. What was particularly satisfying was that we were able to bring a multi-disciplinary team of over 20 loss adjusters and forensic accountants to intensively manage multiple issues according to their particular expertise and experience over a six month period immediately following the fire. This laid the foundation for a negotiated settlement that cut through all of the challenges, satisfying all stakeholders including the insured, the insurers, the

reinsurers, and the various third party stakeholders including governments. It was satisfying, as my early mentors had modelled an individualistic style which tended to dismiss teamwork as largely unnecessary: that was an era in which the “Red Adairs” of the profession were glorified (those not around last century may need to google that allusion!). I felt we had come a long way in recognising that a team approach to large and complex claims was the way to achieve the best results for all stakeholders.

My season as a CEO was relatively short in the context of a loss adjusting career spanning more than 50 years, but it was strategic and very satisfying. I write a little about that experience and my subsequent progression into a professional leadership focus in my book, *“May You Climb from Peak to Peak”*.

I am also grateful to have had the opportunity to serve in multiple ways through industry bodies and to the wider parts of the insurance industry. There is an old saying, “the more you give, the more you get”. I quickly discovered that the more I put up my hand to serve on industry committees, the more I put my hand to writing articles for industry journals and actively seek speaking engagements, that the more I learned in the process and the more opportunities I was given as a result. Putting pen to paper (or fingers to the keyboard!) is a great way to clarify your understanding; challenging yourself to stand up and teach a subject clearly and simply is the

best way to consolidate your own understanding of that subject. There is a proverb in the Book that has provided my greatest inspiration over the years that says: “He who refreshes others will himself be refreshed”.

In the area of broader service to the industry, one of the most satisfying opportunities was to play a role in unifying three competing loss adjusting institutes to unite as the Australasian Institute of Chartered Loss Adjusters, back in the 1990’s. One of the keys to that was developing a world-leading education program, with the assistance of ANZIIF, and it was a privilege to have had a part more recently in updating that while converting it to an on-line learning program.

A lot has changed over the years. The environment in which we work is more complex. The expectations of multiple stakeholders have increased and scrutiny of our work has become more intense. At the same time, the tools available for us to use are much more sophisticated, creating safeguards and efficiencies. But for all the change, some things have become simpler and clearer.

We deal with people, often at a time when they are vulnerable and needing help from someone they can trust. For all the technological advances that have been made and for all the further advances that AI will assist to make, my prediction is that these tools will never reach the point where they can adequately replace the uniquely human dimensions of empathy and intuition needed to produce the

best outcomes for at least the more complex insurance claims.

I used to see my work as “assessing insurance claims”. I came to see it as “helping people to recover from loss”. That change of perspective may sound like semantics but it goes to purpose. The last chapter in my book, *“The Art of Loss Adjusting”*, encourages people to find a noble purpose that motivates their work, as that is needed to produce the best and most satisfying work. I elaborate on my own motivation in that chapter.

The encouragement I give at every opportunity is to take pride in your work. We are in an industry that plays a critical role in our society and in our economy. It provides a crucial safety net that enables people to take sensible risks leading to personal and community prosperity, risks that they would not take as freely without that safety net. And when disaster does happen, as it inevitably will from time to time, we are there to help put the pieces back together, often in ways that lead to even better outcomes. We can be proud of our industry, even if it does not always get it right. We need to take pride in the way we do our part, to make it better than it might be without us.

The motto that has hung on my wall over the years embraces the words of the ancient prophet Micah, “Act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God”. I can’t claim to have done that perfectly on every occasion over the years, but it has been and remains my aspiration and the guiding principle behind my work.



**AICLA offers members the opportunity to advertise positions vacant in LA News.**

The cost is \$300.00 (+ GST) and the advertisement will be run for one month.

The advertisements also appear on the AICLA website [www.aicla.org](http://www.aicla.org).

If you wish to advertise, please send information to [adminoffice@aicla.org](mailto:adminoffice@aicla.org).

Advertisers can remain anonymous with job applicants responding direct to AICLA.