

## GB aims for the top in Agent awards

### Gallagher Bassett teams and individuals are finalists for five awards in the annual WorkSafe Victoria 2010 Industry Support and Service Awards.

The finalists and their categories are:

- Improving Client Performance - (Victoria Police) - Kim Smith, Andrea Moffat and Colin Pitts
- Excellence in Innovation - Quality file reviews (Customer Service Team)
- Outstanding New Starter - Samantha Gathercole
- Outstanding Contribution by a Team - (two nominees) the Learning and Development Team and Motivate (a corporate claims team).

Kim, Andrea and Colin were nominated for Improving Client Performance with Victoria Police (VP). They introduced several processes that improved claims management, return to work (RTW) and communication outcomes.

The initiatives included regional reporting; email claims lodgement and medical certificate registration; and greater VP involvement in case conferencing. That ensures VP is better involved in RTW strategies and reduces repetitive communication with stakeholders post-conference. "We recognise that the more engagement and involvement VP has with ongoing management of claims, the better the outcomes and claims performance," the team's submission said.

The Customer Service Team was nominated for Excellence in Innovation for the quality file reviews completed to address issues such as filing, quality of written correspondence and file notes, timeliness of acceptance letters,

management of medical and other services, and volumes of pending claims.

The thoroughness of the team's initiatives, their execution and ultimately the results achieved for GB and the scheme were recognised as being unique and innovative.

The percentage of files rated excellent has improved significantly since January 2009 and the level of files requiring improvement dropped to 1%.

The team's submission said: "Team managers have responded warmly to the reviews and case managers have taken constructive feedback well." The program helped "instil a culture of excellence" within GB.

Samantha was nominated for Outstanding New Starter for the impressive results she achieved as a Case Manager in team Motivate. Specifically, the nomination noted her results with RTW outcomes, excellence in customer service and the positive impact she has on the team.

Her team manager said: "Samantha is one of a kind. She has exceeded my expectations within her role and is a valued senior team member whom I rely on to drive RTW outcomes and performance and set an example to others in customer service. She is invaluable when it comes to team morale and leads her peers unknowingly by her actions."

The Learning and Development Team was nominated for Outstanding Contribution by a Team for the development, management and success of GB's technical training program. The program is a competency-based learning and development program for

operational team members, supported by the GB Career Directions program. Career Directions is a professional development framework designed to navigate claims staff through the GB claims management levels.

Team Motivate was nominated for the same award for its team-based strategies to improve team dynamics and overall performance.

The team's award submission said: "Our team is called 'Motivate' and that's exactly what we do for each other. All staff focus on their own professional development and encourage each other to do the same." Every team member has an industry qualification or is studying towards one.

Stacey Williams, GB's Victorian Organisational Development Manager, said "GB aimed to emulate, or surpass, its record in last year's awards when GB had three winners."

Bernadette Arvidson took out the Outstanding New Starter category; Dan Miles was selected for Outstanding Contribution by an Individual; and the Victoria Police Team won Outstanding Contribution by a Team (see GB Advantage #54).

The 2010 awards will be presented on September 16 at a dinner to celebrate the 5<sup>th</sup> year of the awards and WorkSafe Victoria's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary.



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Vigilance key to reducing injury rates



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GB a finalist in risk management awards



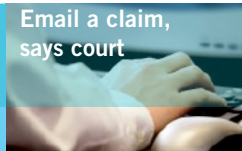
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## Vigilance key to reducing injury rates



Left to right: Sandra Whitlock, Hazeldene's WorkCover Manager; Chloe Hansen, GB MDM Case Manager; Hannah Dent, GB LTM Case Manager and Andrea Moffat, GB Business Account Manager.

**“Vigilance is the key for all employers seeking to achieve and maintain low injury rates”, says Andrea Moffat, GB Business Account Manager.**

**“Sometimes organisations become complacent, but they need to be constantly vigilant. Change must be motivated from the top down,” she said.**

That's one reason GB conducts quarterly reviews of active claims with its clients' senior managers and at times that involves going the extra mile – like a hands-on experience in a chicken processing facility.

GB is the workers' compensation agent for family owned and operated Hazeldene's Chicken Farm, which supplies supermarket chains, wholesalers and distributors. It has a farm and processing facility at Lockwood, 15km from Bendigo, in regional Victoria, additional breeding and broiler farms, and a hatchery at East Bendigo. There are about 500 employees, of whom 300 are based at Lockwood.

Because much of the processing is repetitive work, it can generate muscle strains and sprains. Hazeldene's workers' injuries include postural pain from standing at work stations, sore shoulders and backs, and elbow, wrist and hand injuries.

After GB conducted an on-site claim review at the farm, Sandra Whitlock, Hazeldene's Workplace Injury Manager, took Andrea, Chloe Hansen, GB's Multidisciplinary Management (MDM) Case Manager, and Hannah Dent, Long-Term Management (LTM) Case Manager, on a walkthrough of the processing plant.

The tour was arranged to give the GB team a better understanding of where injuries were occurring and familiarise them with the plant layout.

Hazeldene's processes about 95,000 chickens a day, increasing to about 105,000 near Christmas.

To assist Hazeldene's manage workers' manual handling injuries, GB OHS Manager Karlo Milosevic has spent time with the company training managers to conduct risk assessments and providing advice on how best to reduce risks.

Andrea said “on-site reviews were just one way GB worked in partnership with clients to keep them up to date with claim trends, identify methods to reduce claims, implement RTW programs, and keep injury management programs on track”. Andrea recently presented an overview of Hazeldene's premium and claim trends over the last five financial years to the management team. The presentation aimed to raise awareness among the group and reinforce the message of vigilance.

## WorkSafe Victoria offers financial incentives for employers

**WorkSafe's WISE (WorkSafe Incentive Scheme for Employers) program gives an employer incentives of up to \$26,000 for permanently employing an injured worker - a valuable boost for many small-to-medium businesses.**

Employers who take on a worker through WISE gain:

- a significant financial subsidy
- a committed worker who can provide a positive contribution in the workplace, and
- a worker who has been assessed to safely perform the tasks required.

Workers gain the opportunity to return to work with a supportive employer and experience the sense of purpose and social contact that work provides.

### How does WISE work?

A workplace assessment is conducted to ensure the worker's physical capacity matches the duties required by the role. WorkSafe-approved occupational rehabilitation providers with workplace expertise conduct the assessment.

If the worker has a new injury in their first year of employment, there is no impact on the employer's WorkSafe premium.

The financial subsidy is based on the hours worked and the worker's gross weekly earnings. It is paid regularly over 12 months.

For more information, go to [www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/wise](http://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/wise) or phone WorkSafe Advisory on: 1800 136 089 or (03) 9641 1444.

## GB a finalist in risk management awards



2010 Risk Management Committee. From Left to Right: Craig Thompson, Damien Gilhooley, Chenoa Daley, Greg Larkin, Phil Bawden, Andrea Kanserski, Bill Dwyer, Hedy Babi, Anya Robinson, Keith Mills, Peter Walker

**Gallagher Bassett was selected as a finalist in two categories in the Sentinel Risk Management Awards – the Risk Management Evolution Award and the Risk Enterprise of the Year Award.**

While it was beaten in both by large, publicly listed entities – Qantas for the Risk Enterprise award and Leighton Contractors for the Risk Evolution award – making the finals was a major achievement for GB.

The evolution award submission outlined how GB's risk management plan has evolved over the past five years, including the move to an electronic Management Enterprise Risk Vehicle (MERV) – developed in-house to replace a manual, Excel-based spreadsheet system.

It allows easy access by GB's risk owners and gives the board and senior executives instant access to live data during meetings and at their desktops.

MERV's electronic register includes automated control library, risk allocation, approval process,

escalation, notification and risk reporting functionalities, and other GB system integration capabilities.

The second submission, for Risk Enterprise of the Year, detailed GB's corporate governance structure and how its processes are based on management of risk.

The GB Risk Management Policy and Framework are aligned to ISO 31000 and, together with a very comprehensive risk management plan, support GB's strategic growth objectives and strategies.

The risk plan outlines four distinct phases, each supported by key objectives, strategies and measurable outcomes. Implementing a consistent risk assessment methodology and language supports the identification of risk, assessment and mitigation across all corporate and operational business units at executive, corporate and operational levels.

Integration of the risk plan, including aligning with GB's strategic and operational business planning, audit and compliance, policy, HR and control framework, to name just a few, has allowed GB to capitalise on several new business opportunities and provide governance assurance to existing clients.

The awards are hosted by Risk magazine and were presented in Sydney on August 10.

## Senior executive promotion at GB



**Gallagher Bassett has appointed Damien Gilhooley as General Manager of its Queensland claims operation.**

He will sit on the National Executive and report directly to Managing Director Jon Winsbury.

Damien has been with GB since 1998 and held senior operational and national business development roles. In addition to managing Queensland's general insurance claims staff, he will retain account management responsibility for several key national and overseas property and liability accounts.

He will also play a role in the continued growth of the business. Damien said: "I am excited by the depth of experience within our Queensland claims teams and the diverse opportunities being currently presented to us."

Jon Winsbury said: "Damien is a rare individual - legally qualified with broad claims expertise and extensive management experience. He fully rounded his skills by working in business development for several years, thus making him the obvious candidate for the role."

## GB offers Claims Management and OHS training sessions

**Gallagher Bassett continues to assist clients to manage their workers' compensation and occupational health and safety needs in 2010.**

To ensure clients are well informed on those topics, GB offers a comprehensive range of training sessions.

The following is a sample of forthcoming courses in Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane. For a full list of courses and details on how to register, please access the training calendar on the website or call a GB office for a hard copy. For web access, go to [www.gallagherbassett.com.au](http://www.gallagherbassett.com.au), click on Solutions/Workers' Compensation/Statutory Schemes/Training – the training calendar is on the right-hand side of the screen.

### Victoria:

#### Manual Handling

28 September - Melbourne City

#### Role of a Return to Work Coordinator

5 and 6 October - Melbourne City

24 and 25 November – Melbourne City

#### Return to Work Responsibilities for Line Managers

12 October – Melbourne

#### Basic Claims Management

28 October - Melbourne City

#### Advanced Claims Management

9 November - Melbourne City

### New South Wales:

#### Managing Occupational Stress in the Workplace

19 October - North Sydney

#### Role of a Return to Work Coordinator (Advanced)

11 November - North Sydney

#### How to Build an Effective Health and Safety Culture in Your Workplace

23 November - North Sydney

### Queensland:

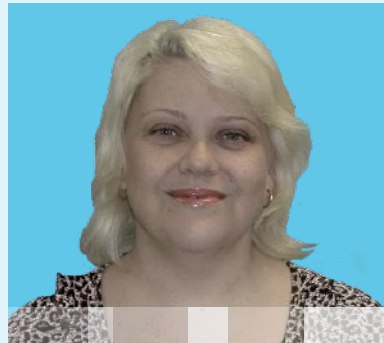
#### NSW Claims Management and Return to Work

18 October - Brisbane

#### Vic Claims Management and Return to Work

19 October – Brisbane

## Persistence and patience assist injured workers' RTW



**Gallagher Bassett Return to Work Co-ordinator Jodie Hind follows five principles in dealing with clients.**

They are persistence, honesty, commitment, empathy, and under promising and over delivering on service.

Her commitment to those principles has seen Jodie nominated by a Q-COMP employee as a first-time entrant in the annual Rehabilitation and RTW Co-ordinator Achievement Award run by Q-COMP, the independent statutory authority that regulates the Queensland workers' compensation scheme.

Jodie is one of five finalists vying for the award.

Her entry outlines the assistance she gave to 'Jeff', a 45-year-old truck driver injured when a large concrete block fell out of the back of a truck and hit him on the foot, causing fractures and lacerations.

"Jeff's case illustrated that if you use your skills and networks, you can achieve success, regardless of the barriers," Jodie said.

Jeff was in a regional centre, so access to specialists was limited, alternative duties were difficult to find because of his industry, and his recovery process did not run smoothly.

Jodie said it was important to "put yourself in their shoes – be aware of what they are battling".

She first spoke to Jeff while he was in hospital and explained the workers' compensation process. He was

released two days later, but off work for 11 weeks, before returning on a graduated RTW plan.

"If you make the claim about the person, not the injury, you will be far more successful in your communications and outcomes. That may require a few phone calls of small talk, with a sprinkle of rehab thrown in, however it secures the relationship and facilitates open, honest communication with the injured worker," Jodie said.

Injured workers need to maintain contact with the workplace and their colleagues and feel valued by their employer.

Jeff studied for additional qualifications during his time off, which gave him another skill when he was fit to return to normal duties.

"There were times he was frustrated and I had to refocus him and remind him to keep trying. We could always amend the plans, but we just couldn't give up," Jodie said.

The physicality of his pre-injury duties made finding meaningful post-injury RTW duties difficult. "However, with persistence from all parties, innovation and open communication, we overcame the challenge," she said.

After nine months, Jeff returned to his pre-injury duties.

**Jodie approaches RTW from a holistic perspective. "I believe my persistence, and 'never say never' attitude contributed significantly to the outcome of Jeff's claim."**

She feels "extremely humbled and rewarded when an injured worker accepts and embraces my involvement on their personal journey. Not many jobs allow you to experience this, but my role as a RTW Coordinator does".

Jodie said not every RTW was 100% successful. "However, doing the best I can in every situation to get the best result possible gives me a feeling of satisfaction."

## Risk management protects corporate reputation



**An enterprise risk management (ERM) framework is as important for a low-hazard business as for one that digs tunnels, operates dangerous equipment or refines explosive chemicals.**

That was the message Peter Walker, Gallagher Bassett's General Manager – Business Development, told a meeting of the Queensland chapter of the Risk Management Institution of Australasia.

"It is extremely unlikely Gallagher Bassett, as a professional services provider, is ever going to kill a member of staff from a paper cut or RSI. Unlike say, a structural engineer, even if we give wrong professional advice, it doesn't have the potential to kill anyone, although it could cost a sizeable sum of money," he said.

However, GB implementing a controlled ERM framework brought about a better structure to the previous, often unconscious, process of informal risk assessment.

ERM was fully integrated into the business. The process formalised recording and reporting of work already being done. "The transparency generated enabled the risk management process to become auditable and that helped it become part of every-day life," Peter said.

For GB, the fundamental importance of being able to demonstrate sound

corporate governance and have high-quality controls in place to manage the inevitable risks was to protect the company's reputation.

**"Client confidence, or trust, can take time to build and, if we do something wrong that impacts on a client, that reputation can be quickly tarnished," Peter said.**

He said several customers who had conducted due diligence as part of procurement or tender processes had given feedback that GB's ERM was better than some much larger organisations. "Punching well above your weight was how one major household insurer described it."

Peter said it was vital for clients to be able to trust GB to "look after their interests and their money".

GB has many large government contracts and is the Federal Government's only third party provider to have been granted direct access to the Reserve Bank to draw down on public money. That allows GB to handle the run off of hardship claims under the HIH compensation scheme.

Peter said granting that delegation was a huge step for the government and was

possible only because the government had "confidence in our systems, processes and management".

"Demonstrating a strong ERM culture and adequate controls was an essential part of building that trust. Treasury needed to see that we were constantly considering risks that might affect delivery of the scheme's claims management service."

Peter said the GB ERM framework's benefits included having risk mitigation at a company wide not local level, and the best possible value from the risk treatment spend.

"At a consolidated business level, one unit's highest risk may not be as critical as say the first five risks of another business area. Creating visibility and enabling an independent, corporate review ensures the maximum bang for our risk mitigation buck," he said.

GB implemented an Investment Council and any projects valued at more than \$50,000, including risk mitigation or treatment projects, go through the council for spend approval.

"This adds further rigour to the risk prioritisation process and ensures continuity of funding from a budget point of view, which is especially important to ensure longer-term projects can see out the full duration," Peter said.

## GB pair finalists in excellence awards



**Two GB team members, Hoang Pham and Sarah Holmes, are finalists in the Personal Injury Education Foundation's 2010 Excellence in Personal Injury Management Awards.**

Both are finalists in the excellence in return to work/return to community category.

The awards, a highlight of the 2010 Personal Injury Management Conference, will be presented at Melbourne's Grand Hyatt Hotel on October 14.

The Personal Injury Education Foundation (PIEF) was established in 2006 by a consortium of Australian and New Zealand accident compensation regulators, insurers and claims management organisations.

Its role is to develop leading educational programs and initiatives focused on the needs of people working in the accident compensation industry.

**PIEF Executive Manager Nathan Clarke said the awards showcased the highest quality talent in the industry. "Just being nominated is a real achievement. It reflects a lot of hard work, empathy and persistence," he said.**

The 2010 awards attracted 88 nominations from Australia and New Zealand; almost double the number submitted in 2008. There are 18 finalists.

## GB dials up state-of-the-art technology



**Gallagher Bassett has significantly reduced its telecommunications expenditure while concurrently increasing service for clients by implementing a VoIP telephone system.**

VoIP (voice over internet protocol) uses the internet to transmit phone calls, rather than the public switched telephone network. VoIP converts the analog voice signal to digital format, compresses it into internet protocol packets for transmission, then reconverts the data to a voice signal.

For clients, there is no discernible difference in the phone call, apart from improved voice clarity.

However, for GB, it means all calls within the GB office network, including New Zealand, are free, regardless of geographical distances or time spent on the phone. GB team members can work remotely, with instant diversion of their usual phone numbers to mobile or home phones.

GB team members can access features such as extension dialling, call transfer, conference calls, and integration with Microsoft software and directories, all while working away from their office phones.

Up to eight people can participate on conference calls and team members

can dial direct from their computers. Julian Martin, General Manager – Information Systems, said a key advantage for GB clients was the system's enhanced disaster capabilities. With easier call routing, when GB is handling claims calls after a disaster, multiple calls can be answered simultaneously because they can be routed to any GB office anywhere within the network.

**"It increases capability on the data network, with greater resilience and throughput," he said.**

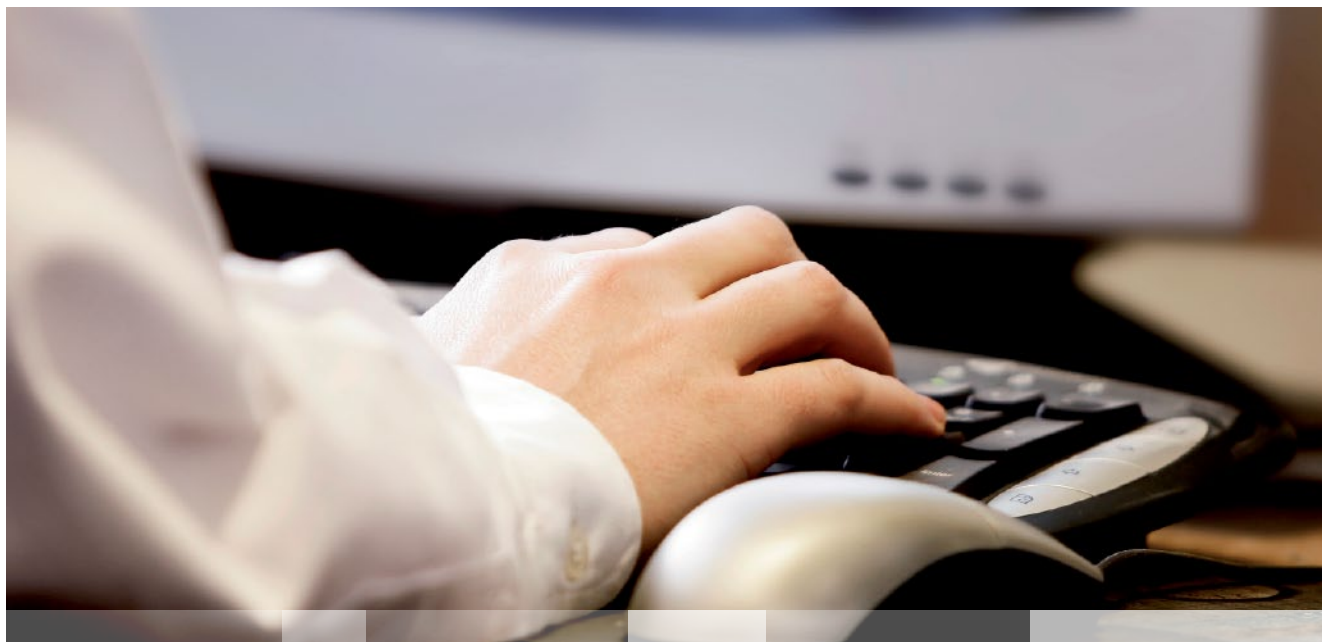
Implementation began in the Brisbane head office in February and the system has now been rolled out across all GB offices in Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and New Zealand.

GB selected Telstra IP Telephony (TIPT) as its preferred system and Telstra has managed implementation throughout the GB network.

TIPT uses a hosted delivery model that allows interoperability with existing telephone systems.

Julian said TIPT's business drivers were minimising costs, converging voice and data, and standardising technology across all sites.

## Email a claim, says court



### **What is a claim? The NSW Supreme Court has ruled that an email warning of a potential claim can constitute a claim.**

Having made that decision, Justice Ralph Hoeben then rejected a professional indemnity insurer's attempt to deny indemnity to a registered valuer who had not notified it immediately of a possible claim against him.

Valuer Eric J Leslie had a professional indemnity insurance policy for the year from January 21, 2008, to January 21, 2009, with Calliden.

On January 14, 2008, Mr Leslie valued a property for Dimitra Cassidy at \$1.5 million. Mr Cassidy lent Professional Management Services (WA) Pty Ltd (PMS) \$900,000 with its property as security. PMS defaulted, Mr Cassidy took possession and the property was sold at a public auction on October 11, 2008, for \$350,000.

On April 11, 2008, Mr Leslie had received an email from Steven Gavagna, of Goodman Law, representing Mr Cassidy. The email said two real estate agents believed the property would not sell for more than one third of the amount at which it had been valued. Mr Gavagna told Mr Leslie an insurable event might occur if the property did not sell for enough money to repay the loan

and ended with "Do not ignore this email".

Part of the email text read: "Our instructions are to place you on notice that an insurable event may occur if the property does not provide sufficient funds at auction to repay the loan. We strongly suggest you obtain legal advice."

Mr Leslie did not tell Calliden he had received the email until January 22, 2009.

On April 4, 2009, Mr Cassidy sued Mr Leslie, claiming the \$1.5 million valuation was "grossly in excess of the true value of the land".

The principal action was still in court, however Justice Hoeben ruled separately on cross-claims between Mr Leslie and Calliden. Mr Leslie argued, in the absence of any evidence of prejudice suffered by the insurer, the failure to notify had no effect on his entitlement to indemnity.

But Calliden argued the claim against Mr Leslie was made outside the period of insurance. It argued the email itself was not a claim because no loss had occurred at the time, there was no certainty a loss would occur, and the prospect of a loss was expressed in the email to be only a possibility.

Justice Hoeben said Calliden's argument that to read the email as suggesting anything more than a mere possibility of a loss would "divorce the words from their context".

But Justice Hoeben ruled the email was a claim within the terms of the policy and then ruled Calliden was not entitled to deny indemnity on the basis the claim was not notified to it within the period of insurance.

Law firm Clayton Utz, in a commentary on the case, said it demonstrated the importance of insureds telling insurers as soon as they received notification of any threat. "When litigation is threatened it is essential to carefully manage the insurance notification. It is dangerous to hold off notifying your insurer in the belief the threatened litigation may not eventuate," the firm said.

Clayton Utz said Mr Leslie was fortunate the threatened litigation fell within the definition of a claim and the failure to notify could be remedied. Otherwise, he would have been exposed to an uninsured risk.

The case also showed the need to review policy terms. The firm said insureds should seek a deeming clause that permits notification of potential claims so the policy provides the broadest possible cover.

## GB staff snapshots



Liability Claims Specialist  
**Peter Kuskis**

**Peter** has an ingrained focus on efficiency, quality of service, client satisfaction and problem solving.

His insurance career began in 1972 when he worked as a Legal Officer in GIO's CTP claims division. Between 1972 and 1984, his role focused on handling litigated matters, including appeals, attending court, and handling resolution of legal costs, including matters which proceeded as far as the High Court of Australia.

Peter has held workers' compensation claims management roles with GRE Workers' Compensation Insurance (NSW) Ltd and Zurich Australian Workers' Compensation Ltd. He has been employed as a liability claims specialist with Jardine Lloyd Thompson/ Echelon Claims Services, managing high profile and litigated liability claims in all states and territories throughout Australia.



Liability Claims Consultant  
**Marissa Carey-Brenton**

As an experienced claims management professional, **Marissa's** goal is to ensure clients' interests are paramount and claims are investigated and managed proactively and cost effectively.

Marissa entered the insurance industry in 1994, working first for QBE and then MMI in workers' compensation for six years. She held a CTP claims assessing role with CGU Insurance, managing personal injury and liability claims.

In 2001, Marissa joined Marsh Pty Ltd as a Public Liability Claims Consultant where she gained experience with large self-insured retentions, negotiating high-profile litigated claims.

Before joining GB, Marissa worked with Aon Risk Services Pty Ltd administering liability claims for the Comcover account and managing professional indemnity, directors & officers and general liability claims.



Senior Liability Claims Consultant  
**Steve Kopti**

**Steve** practised as a solicitor for seven years before accepting a position with Vero as a Technical Officer in the insurer's liability claims team and later as a Senior Claims Officer in the commercial claims team.

His role involved managing a liability portfolio comprising property and personal injury liability claims. While the majority of those claims were litigated, Steve's focus was to implement alternative dispute resolution practices, which was largely successful.

Steve's philosophy is to be proactive in driving a claim to ensure it is moved towards resolution by making early and regular contact with all stakeholders, developing a clear strategy for resolution, and executing that strategy with precision.

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### CUSTOMER FEEDBACK

To provide us with customer feedback, please visit our website, [www.gallagherbassett.com.au](http://www.gallagherbassett.com.au) and look under Contact Us or alternatively, email us directly on the relevant email address below:

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PrintPost Approval: PP431003/10072



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