



2023 in Review

College Chronicle
Newsletter

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Australian College
of Professionals

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As we arrive at the Christmas/ New Year season of yet another super busy year, we usually start lamenting about “where has the year gone” and it seems like only yesterday that it was Easter.

This year seems like it has taken forever to get to December. After the past few years, I think that everyone is working harder, playing harder and our property market has seen so many changes – many agents and their clients have little idea of what the now and the future holds.

Just like last year, the first couple of months of this year for the property industry in NSW meant a mad scramble to the deadline of 23rd March and agents attempting to get their CPD requirements completed and Assistant Agents working towards completing their modules for their licensing needs. For us here at ACOP this meant supporting many, many students through the training and assessment pathways to achieve their goals in real estate, stock & station and strata management. And then a little breather in April, and our wonderful students started with their CPD and licensing training for the new year again.

ACOP Assessors conducted many Compliance Audits throughout the year and assisted agencies to meet their supervision and compliance requirements in terms of having tailored Supervision Guidelines and Policy & Procedures documents. What we have found mostly throughout agencies, is that most agents WANT to be compliant, but just need a little support to get there. They are so focused on running their business, that some of the finer compliance details tend to get left behind. It's been an absolute pleasure to work with these agents and their teams in supporting them to see that compliance is part of being successful in their daily practices and providing high quality services to

their customers.

The changes for CPD are now in their fourth year since the major changes with the Property Services Reforms in March 2020, and unfortunately are still causing confusion for some agents. Some of this confusion comes from another major change to the CPD requirements. This 2023 CPD is not about the class of licence you have, but now it is about the category. Simply – if you're either a Class 1 or a Class 2 licensed agent, then it's 4 hours of CPD this 2023 year (focusing on the compulsory topics set by NSW Fair Trading). There are no more compulsory or business skills CPD sessions. However, if you hold more than one category of licence, that is Real Estate and Stock & Station OR Real Estate and Strata Management – then you are required to do additional CPD training for each additional category of licence. Whilst this was also a requirement in the past few years, it is now much more focused on the category and function of what agents do on a daily basis. And there were no changes for the agents who are not licensed and hold a Certificate of Registration - you still need to complete 3 Units of Competency towards your licence qualification. Just call us and we'll put you on the right pathway.

Like last year, we have continued to offer a combination of online, interactive webinars and face-to-face sessions for CPD training. However, the requirement from NSW Fair Trading is that anyone choosing the online option for their CPD training, need to complete 10 hours of online training, instead of the 4 hours required if they choose the interactive webinar or face-to-face options. Many of our students, even though they like the option of interactive webinars, returned in droves to our face-to-face classes where they could share stories and learn from like-minded colleagues.

After a year without restrictions on how we live (at least not ones being forced upon us), the problem that came from the Covid period of people not being

able to make decisions for themselves – has not decreased in a great way. Many people are still finding it difficult to actually make a decision, which means that for agents, you need to work harder than ever before in assisting your clients through the property maze of sales and property management. It has been a huge task for every workplace – not just in the property industry – that we need to reconnect with our colleagues, listen and contribute to our workplaces. If we are to work towards good mental health, then let's take it on seriously as an industry. We need to connect with those around us and support them. This is more easily said than done, and it's going to take time, energy, conscious effort and reliance upon each other – to return to working successfully with our team mates and colleagues.

ACOP turned 20 on 30th November 2023 and as we have done in previous years, we had a month of celebrations in November where our students received the gifts, with a colouring-in competition and a 20% discount on all ACOP courses and services for a 20 day period to mark our 20 years in business. And who doesn't love a good excuse for a cake – and we must say, we had quite a few this past year. It's certainly been a roller-coaster of a ride these past twenty years, but we wouldn't want to be anywhere else. The party for our 20th celebration was a night to remember with over 200 of our wonderful clients, staff (present and past) and family and friends who have supported us along our journey.

We have had many other celebrations this year at the College with staff members passing exams, having babies (welcome little Charlie to our Quality Improvement Manager, Megan and her husband Matt), and naturally the many birthdays throughout the year. Through the good and bad of people's personal lives, the team supports each other which makes me a very proud business owner.

And it's a wrap for 2023. It's our last



fortnightly College Chronicle for the year so I thought a summary of the major topics that we have covered this year would be a great idea – just to show how much ground we have crossed. Remember that all past editions of the Chronicle are available on our website. In 2023, our topics have included:

- Compliance of Window Safety Devices
- Commercial Property Lock-Outs
- Underquoting
- When a licence or a certificate of registration is NOT required
- What is meant by a 'Registered Office'
- Shared Equity Home Buyer Helper
- The Real Estate Industry Award
- Toilets in Rental Properties
- Can a tenant sue an agent or landlord for negligence?
- Trust Accounts
- First Home Buyer Incentives
- Flammable Cladding
- Vendor Advocates
- Property Owner ID Requirements
- What really is 'Material Fact'?

- Electronic Service of Documents
- Rent Increases
- To disclose or not to disclose – that is the question
- Agency Training Plans – changes to the Supervision Guidelines

We have focused heavily this year in training on compliance requirements and how to best cope in a changing environment. We truly believe that if agents implement the ethos of these legislatively required rules, that our industry will be better and create a way more professional playing field. This is certainly the underpinning philosophy for why we do what we do here at ACOP.

As with previous years (in fact this is our fourteenth year), ACOP was one of the few Registered Training Organisations that was granted the ability to offer government funding in the property, finance and management sectors – meaning that we continue to be closely monitored by Training Services NSW to ensure that our high standards of training are continuously met. With funding available for fee-free traineeships for those students who sign-up with approved providers such as ACOP, subsidised training for experienced workers, and half fees to people aged between 40 and 70 – it is an exciting time to be operating in the training arena - so bring on 2024 is all we can say. This past year, ACOP also had access to full “fee-free funding” for anyone wishing to complete specific training programs. This government funding has now been exhausted and we are waiting eagerly to hear if government will be extending this into the new year and for which targeted qualifications. Fingers crossed that real estate and strata management are listed in the qualifications available for this funding.

There have been comings and going at ACOP this year. We said sad farewells to Kristine as a full-time trainer/assessor – however, she is still running training for us on a casual basis – so she hasn't escaped fully. We have a few

new staff members in Anna (here for a short time whilst on a working holiday from Ireland); Jorja and Kyah (new uni students who will work at ACOP whilst completing their uni studies); and Susan.

At this time of the year, many of us are focusing on the good times ahead with our family and loved ones – and the joy of planning gatherings and the copious amounts of food that we will consume. This year's ACOP Christmas celebrations with current and past team members, was held in early December at a restaurant at Darling Harbour with beautiful views and magnificent food and even better company. It was a wonderful night to celebrate the year that has been.

As you plan your work and family celebrations, remember to be mindful and ensure the safety of yourself and your friends as they travel to and from the celebrations, particularly if they are enjoying a few drinks at the parties.

It is now December and this means that it is time to reflect on the year that has been. Every day we hear the news, read the papers, and on the internet – the bad things that are happening in our world. We have seen negative changes to people's behaviour, negative effects on people's mental health, and negative effects on how people communicate with others. Not to mention the cost of living crisis, the rental crisis, or the affordable housing crisis. When talking to other businesses in all industries, there seems to have been an increase in people's stress levels. So now it's Christmas and time when we should be reflecting on what has happened in our lives during the year, and plan to make our lives, and the lives of those we can influence, a better place. We need to be grateful for the good in our lives, be that small or large. So please be kind to yourself and to others. We all need it so much this year more than ever.

My loyal partner in business and life, John has organised for the two of us to

travel to Singapore for a few days of rest and relaxation. We will be spending time with some friends and enjoying everything that Singapore and its surrounds has to offer.

As I always state in my final newsletter of the year, this is a time for reflection – both from a business and a personal perspective. We need to remember those in our community who need a little extra support at this time of the year. ACOP continues to actively support the Northern Beaches Women's Shelter (through my position as Board Chair). ACOP also strongly supports the Cambodian Children's Fund and the team enjoy their participation in the planning for major fundraising events and assisting in the work that is done through these organisations. Both of these organisations held major events this year and raised much needed funds to continue their important work in supporting women, children and the need for education. Let's spare everyone around us some extra thought and care this Christmas and New Year wherever and whenever we can – it will make everyone's Christmas so much better.

ACOP will close its doors and telephone lines at 3.00pm on Friday 15th December and reopen on Wednesday 3rd January at 8.30am. Naturally, you will still be able to login online and enrol and complete CPD training and licensing modules if required. Any of your questions will be addressed as soon as we are back at our desks fully

refreshed from our break on the 3rd January.

On behalf of John and myself and all of the magnificent ACOP team, we send our warm festive regards and wish you a truly happy Christmas and a safe, healthy and prosperous 2024. Let's take the opportunity to be grateful for all that is good in our lives and plan to make a fresh start with fabulous new ideas for the start of the brave new era of 2024.

Don't forget to leave out the beer and cookies for Santa and a carrot or two for the reindeer (and perhaps raise a glass of your preferred beverage – be it champagne or Coke No Sugar – to those you love and hold close to your hearts and to those who are no longer with us). Stay safe and happy. We are looking forward to seeing you all in the new year.

'Til next year

Wishing you every success in your business and personal ventures

[Rosy Sullivan](#)
[Director | College Principal](#)



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