

Australian Principals Federation

President's Message—Julie Podbury



We sent an email to members last Friday 24th Feb, advising that some Regions (NW & NE) had asked schools to finish their Child Safe Compliance by signing the Statutory Declaration as required by the VRQA.

Many members are furious that the DET has begun this and regard the request as bullying and harassment, especially as there was a suggestion in one directive that schools could be de-registered by not complying. Some members are disturbed and angry by being asked to attest, via a legal instrument that they are telling the truth. Some have indicated to me, that they view this as such an affront they are considering quitting the DET by resigning their position as principal.

Our advice is that you should follow the directive and sign as requested, as not doing so is a risk to your employment. Specifically we advise:

- Wait until this is requested of you. SE & SW are yet to do so.
- Insist that your Line-Manager, the RD makes the request and then you need to comply... or not as you see fit.
- The document can be counter-signed by another Principal or a SEIL, as well as the local Pharmacist or Police Officer. Copy embedded in this article.
- You may wish to add a note outlining your position in respect to this.
- Scan and save a copy as a PDF and send to wallis.lauren.m@edumail.vic.gov.au, your SEIL (& RD if you wish) at your Region. Lauren will forward them to VRQA

A WORD copy of the documentation you need is [here](#) for your convenience.

In this newsletter:

- [EBA Update—David Finnerty](#)
- [Building Capacity in Leaders and Teachers— John Handley](#)
- [You, Your School and Workers Compensation— Mark Arkinstall](#)
- [School Leadership Wellbeing PD — Kaya Consulting— Last Chance to Register !!](#)
- [Member Feedback— School Audits](#)
- [Superannuation 2017 — Andrew Peters, Semaphore Private](#)

We include a link to a story about the **changes Finland is making in their schools**. Finland, always listed in the top 10 schools in PISA rankings, continues to push the boundaries. This article makes thought provoking reading. [Read the article here.](#)

An article from news.com.au that follows the release of the annual Report from Assoc .Prof. Phil Riley. [Why our principals are in trouble.](#)

Lastly we include an important article about the role of [Positive Psychology in principal H&WB and resilience](#) from APF member, Marcus Wicher, Principal at Auburn South Primary School, who is currently completing a Master of Applied Positive Psychology at Melbourne University.



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**Comment by
Federal President,
Peter Beckingham**

Life in schools continues to be challenged by bottom line fiscal challenges linked with economic, industry and societal trends, the latter giving rise to numerous challenges causing significant pressures on individuals leading schools. This is something that only an industrial organisation can bring to the negotiating table to demand attention and action for incorporation into an agreement for remuneration or recognition. Together, with the industrial organisations representing Principals, and in working with the various professional associations, I hope to build our common strength and raise the profile of school leaders across Australia.



The industrial organisation for the Principal Class

Enterprise Bargaining Update, David Finnerty, EBA Team Leader



On your behalf, the APF Enterprise Bargaining Agreement EBA team has been meeting regularly with representatives of the Department, and Treasury and Finance since early last year. During the course of negotiating an EBA outcome, there are major restrictions on what can and cannot be said about what has been the subject of discussions across the table which, by necessity, means of this report cannot go into any detail as to what has or has not been discussed across the table.

I am able to report, however, that discussions across the table have centred around clear parameters for improvement in the EBA outcomes for principal class employees. I can confidently report that your negotiating team comprising Steve Durkin, Loretta Piazza and of course Julie Podbury, the Victorian branch president and supported by Angela Stefani, have put on the table a range of matters that have gained quite a deal of traction from Tony Bugden and his team. I very much look forward to being able to report in detail regarding these matters, once agreement is reached. The APF team have been able to markedly inform a range of areas that cover the working conditions of principal class employees that, without doubt, will be embraced in the agreement when it is finally delivered. It is also of note that your team have taken up for discussion, a broad range of matters that fall outside of the context of an EBA but which markedly impact the work context, environment and workload of principal class employees. Once the EBA negotiations are finalised, your team will turn its attention to further progressing these matters in order to achieve improvement in the working conditions of you, our members.

These are exciting times for the APF and I very much look forward to continuing to lead our team toward achieving conditions that better reflect your roles as senior administrators and educational leaders in the Department.

UPDATE: Information from the AEC—APF Board Vacancies



You should receive the Election Notice from the AEC at your workplace address **this week**.

Nominations Open:	Tuesday 28 February 2017
Nominations Close:	5pm AEDT on Tuesday 21 March 2017
Postal Ballot Opens:	Tuesday, 18 April 2017
Postal Ballot Closes at 10am AEST on	Tuesday, 9 May 2017

Note: The notice and the nominations forms are now on our website.

<http://apf.net.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Nomination-form.pdf>

<http://apf.net.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Election-Notice-2017.pdf>



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David Finnerty
Treasurer
Vic Branch
& EBA Team Leader

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Building Capacity in Leaders and Teachers - John Handley, APF Adviser



This is the third in a series of opinion pieces for Principals and Assistant Principals aimed at promoting reflection on practices to establish and sustain high performing or reliability schools*. Each article is premised on the view that there is often considerable variation of practice, expectation and outcomes across and within our schools. And that we, as School Leaders, are in a privileged position to influence the outcomes of our staff and students.

**Schools that adopt practices to maximise the intellectual growth in performance and personal, social and emotional development of their students, regardless of changes in teaching personnel; e.g. at XXX Primary School you can expect abc.*

What do we mean by Building Capacity?

As we aspire to develop, and subsequently, sustain high quality teaching and learning practice in our schools, building teacher and leadership capacity continues to present an ongoing challenge. In our recent articles the importance of your vision for both your school and your leadership teams was highlighted. However, even with the most accomplished team of leaders and teachers, further development of their capacities is critical to sustaining high performance. Clearly with less able staff this need becomes more critical.

There are some generic observations that are worthy of recall.

In **Building Capacity**, and systems to support it, we note and should remind our staff that:

- our school can make a difference but each TEACHER MAKES A SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCE.
- we value the individual as part of our educational community and not as an individual in isolation; hence, the need for a collaborative approach to school practices.
- best practice in teaching & learning should be aspirational – continual improvement comes from each of us striving to be more effective.
- we must have agreed expectations and understanding of what high quality teaching and learning looks like ("Best Practice"?)
- we need every teacher striving to teach to the best of their ability, whilst as a school we focus on capacity building of each of these teachers.
- on any journey or quest for improvement there will be times of disappointment, setbacks and conflict along with joy, agreement and progress
- it is critical that we recognise and celebrate achievement and effort, and have empathy in times of setback and disappointment
- we should promote and participate in professional conversations about what each of us is actually doing in our classrooms, and identify "high quality practice"

In **Building Capacity**, it becomes important we don't assume knowledge, but discuss and share views on "High Quality Practice". Hence, we can be work-shopping at both Leadership and teacher level:

- What does it look like?
- How do we recognise it?
- What do we look for?
- What evidence would/could/should we use to judge whether our practices are "high quality"?
- What Systems to reinforce and sustain such practices are essential?
- How best do we capture and provide access to such practice in our school?
- What is the appropriate support needed – induction, mentoring, coaching, peer observation, teacher workshops?

Bridging the Variation Gap

For the reality is, in many of our schools we still need to minimise variations of practice between classes. From a leadership perspective to bridge this gap we need to use a range of initiatives and approaches whilst never losing site of the main contention. Namely the most effective practices must be mainstreamed, and variations of practices particularly at the less effective end be eliminated.

This work requires considerable emphasis on capacity building. (continued on P3)....

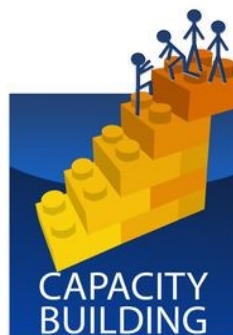


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"Last year, Price-waterhouseCoopers released a study demonstrating that, over the next 30 years, Australia's standing in overall national wealth will fall well behind that of several of our near neighbours who currently are far poorer than we are. If those same neighbours also possess a far more effective standard of education than our own, this would be a powerful predictor of an increasingly difficult and poorer standard of living for our grandchildren. Surely it's well and truly time to wake up and take the remedial action that's so urgently needed."

Ross Fitzgerald,
emeritus professor of
history and politics at
Griffith University, 8
January 2017



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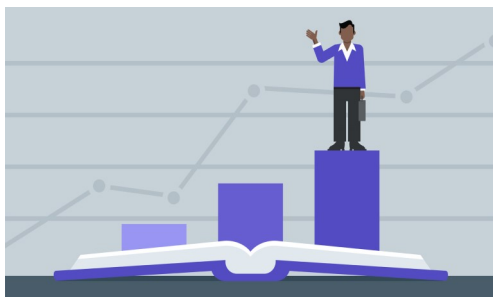
Most importantly it takes time for the consensus across all elements of our school communities to be unified in our agreement of the direction the school must go to be a sustainable high performing global educator.

Essentially, learning is most effective in a school environment when done collaboratively.

"Teacher teams increasingly assume collective responsibility for producing more effective learning for all students, regardless of who teaches them, while each team member maintains a commitment to individual accountability" (Neville J. Johnson)

This is both classroom based for students, and staffroom based for teachers. It can include virtual classrooms/staffrooms. In any organization, there are a variety of skill sets and knowledge bases, and most importantly there is great variation in learning capacity and mindset. Here it is essential to identify where each is at, plan their development, and not leave it to chance.

The heart of our work is to ensure all students can learn well; and they progress in their time with us in a way that optimises their post school potential.



Hence, it is clear that our moral and professional imperative is to optimise the capacity of every staff member to contribute to student progress and success. This requires a collaborative, open minded approach to identifying what is most important to teach, how best to teach it, and how we might know whether we are effective.

In a parallel sense, it is the responsibility of school leadership to provide every opportunity for teachers:

- to grow in their knowledge of their practice and their capacity as leaders of learning,
- to be a community of learners that thrive on the challenges of their work,
- to gain satisfaction from the support provided by their peers as well as the success of their students.

And for us as Principals to do likewise for our Leaders.

What might this look like and how might we progress?

Initially it involves developing a series of guiding principles and complementary documents that provide the foundations for collaborative practice and professional learning community building. In the previous article, a set of protocols of practice for professional behavior was highlighted (remember they were developed through collaborative effort). This could be complemented with protocols and practices for other key areas such as curriculum development, student assessment and subsequent reporting, student well-being, teacher learning, performance and development, communication and decision-making, and others as required.

This requires us to build common understanding and agreement amongst our school leaders of what is best for our school to be a progressive 21st Century global educator. It requires constant rigorous discussion, coaching and mentoring. It requires identification of believers and non-believers. It requires us to review our staff selection processes to ensure our future employees are learners, are collaborative, and have a growth mindset, and it requires that we review our induction and early support practices. And in some schools, it will require a review in a range of other organisational practices like location of staff, timetabling, communication, and the concept of staff meetings.

We need to identify, through careful staff recruitment and allocation, the teaching areas that require most support and the strongest leadership. And then to support the leaders in these areas and help them by increasing their effectiveness through education and coaching; to model and have them practice empowerment whilst maintaining effective levels of reciprocal accountability (again this will require coaching). (continued on p4)..

I have a GROWTH MINDSET!



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Membership is growing...

because you have been encouraging your colleagues to join you as a member of the APF.

Thank You!



Angela Stefani
APF Executive Officer

astefani@apf.net.au

Join the APF

www.apf.net.au

Forms can be completed on line.



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This enables your school to build models of practice that are demonstrably effective through improved student outcomes, increased commonality of high quality of practice, reciprocal accountability, and improved satisfaction as educators.

In essence, on a school wide level you will address instructional models, curriculum development, well-being, feedback and communication practices, whilst working in a more focussed manner with core teams of teachers on specifics. And have your Leadership Team working closely with subject based, grade level and well-being staff. Hence, this eventuates in increased leadership capacity at many levels and improved intellectual understanding of school improvement.

These ideas are consistent with research by Goddard et al with respect to Instructional Leadership.

Characteristics of Principals who are strong instructional leaders (*our core business*):

- Very knowledgeable about effective instructional practices and curriculum;
- Very knowledgeable about effective classroom assessment practices;
- Provide conceptual guidance for teachers on effective classroom practices;
- Set high standards for teaching and student learning;
- Directly involved in helping teachers address instructional issues in classrooms;
- Push teachers to implement what they have learned in professional development;
- Actively monitor the quality of teaching in the school through systematic and frequent classroom visits;
- Develop a shared vision of what the school could be like;
- Encourage people to express opinions that might be contrary to the leader's.



Leadership in education is about learning – the learning of others has to be at heart of the decision-making of any educational leader.

"A Theoretical and Empirical Analysis of the Roles of Instructional Leadership, Teacher Collaboration, and Collective Efficacy Beliefs in Support of Student Learning" by Roger Goddard, Yvonne Goddard, Eun Sook Kim, and Robert Miller in *American Journal of Education*, August 2015

The next article in the series will focus on Mentoring and Induction; important to the future success and satisfaction of each employee and the school.

You, Your School and Workers Compensation - Mark Arkinstall, APF

At any given time we support members in this space, often when dealing with a claim of their own and often when dealing with claims made by members of staff. For further advice and support in this complex area, please feel free to contact our office. We also recommend you visit <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/management/Pages/worksafemgkit.aspx> for further detailed information.

For your interest, some key points include:

- Gallagher Bassett is the Department's Workers' Compensation Agent. All claims received from Department employees must be sent to Gallagher Bassett for management.
- Timelines are very important in responding to or submitting claims.
- Making a workers' compensation claim does not automatically mean it is accepted. Gallagher Bassett will determine whether the claim is accepted or rejected.
- If an employee sustains a work related injury, or advises that they wish to lodge a WorkSafe claim, ensure that the incident has been reported in eduSafe.
- All paperwork relating to the claim must be forwarded to Gallagher Bassett within **10 days** from the date you received the claim form from the employee.
- Employees must notify the employer of a work related claim or injury within **30 days** of becoming aware of it.
- Keep everything documented.
- Gallagher Bassett will contact the principal **within 48 hours** of receiving the claim to discuss it.
- Gallagher Bassett will advise the claimant in writing if the claim has been accepted or rejected. They will do this within **28 days** of receiving the claim. (continued on P5)...



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Mark Arkinstall
APF Industrial Officer

Injured employees are required to:

- notify their employer of a work related injury or illness within 30 days of becoming aware of it,
- participate in assessments of their capacity for work and approved rehabilitation programs and make reasonable attempts to return to work in suitable employment if they have an accepted WorkSafe claim,
- provide evidence of current weekly earnings to Gall. Bassett,
- cooperate with their employer's attempts to return them to work,
- provide valid WorkSafe Certificates of Capacity to receive weekly compensation

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Some things you may not have known:

- For claims of Mental Injury (stress, anxiety) you will have a role to play in supporting Gallagher Bassett when they make their decision. Generally speaking, claims arising from reasonable management actions will not be accepted. Eg. Appraisal of work performance, investigations of misconduct, contract non-renewal, etc. So, an employee can't disagree with a reasonable management action and opt for WorkSafe instead, the claim would be rejected.
- Gallagher Bassett outsource a variety of functions. These include contracting private companies to:
 - Assess the circumstances of a claim.
 - Provide assistance to WorkSafe claimants with their rehabilitation and return to work. There is a huge focus on getting the injured worker back to work.
- Make Up Period: Initially, Gallagher Bassett pay the bulk of weekly payments with the department "topping this up" for the first 1984 hours of absence (or a prorated number of hours for part time employees) while the claimant continues to be employed by the DEECD. This is known as the make up period. During the make up period a claimant's total weekly pay will be the same as their usual pay for the applicable period and will comprise weekly Gallagher Bassett benefits and DET make up pay.

The following entitlements continue to accrue during the make up pay period:

- Personal leave
- Long service leave
- Annual leave loading
- Recreation leave (non-teaching staff)
- Employer superannuation contributions

After the make up pay period ends, employees are deemed to be on unpaid leave for the purpose of accrual of service entitlements.

- When WorkSafe weekly compensation payments continue beyond the make up pay period, the claimant only receives as a salary payment the weekly WorkSafe benefit paid by Gallagher Bassett. This is based on the PIAWE (Pre Injury Average Weekly Earnings) and is calculated on the 52 weeks prior to injury. The weekly compensation payment will be 80% of the PIAWE. Note that EBA pay rises and increment rises that came after the injury date will not apply once the make up period is over. **The drop in salary is significant.**
- Superannuation: Claimants should make contact with their superannuation fund for further information on how their entitlements might be impacted.
- Claims Liability Dispute Resolution: If a claimant disagrees with the Gallagher Bassett decision on the claim they can:
 - Request Gallagher Bassett to conduct a 'senior officer' review of the claim decision.
 - Refer the dispute to the Accident Compensation Conciliation Service. (We've been increasingly supporting our members in this area and have found the service to be excellent and fair to all.)
 - Appeal to the appropriate court. (Incredibly expensive and risky.)
- If the claimant has not returned to work, the entitlement to weekly benefits will **cease at 130 weeks** if they have been assessed as having any capacity for work. (Not necessarily in their former role.)
- For employees who have no capacity for work, entitlement to weekly benefits may continue beyond 130 weeks until they reach 65 years of age, provided they continue to have no capacity for work.



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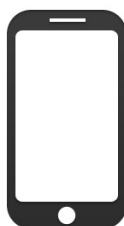
Julie Podbury
APF President
Vic Branch

"Indonesia has taken steps to elevate the status of the teacher in response to the recommendations of the OECD. We now have a dedicated teacher check-in desk for Garuda Airlines. We would also like them to introduce priority boarding, first class, business class, and teachers' class. Why? It's a reminder to everyone. Airports are where policymakers are constantly, it makes them realise they are flying because teachers taught them, without those teachers they would not be flying."

Indonesia's Education Minister Anies Baswedan

Maybe Qantas should do this for principals!

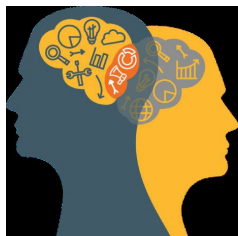
Please feel free to contact the APF for further support in this area, we're here to help.



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1300 737 060 / cyberhound.com / info@cyberhound.com



School Leader Wellbeing— Kaya Consulting

NOTE CHANGE: This program commences 22nd March at McKinnon SC only

Program Description [See updated details in flyer](#)

Building on our understanding that wellbeing is an interplay between individual, relational and organisational influences, this program provides a comprehensive process for School Leader wellbeing. Rather than providing a simplistic workshop with a few strategies this Wellbeing series provides school leaders with a tool to investigate their own wellbeing, examine the impact of leadership on wellbeing and a framework for improving staff wellbeing.

The base package includes four day long workshops, spread out over 6 months, with an optional facilitated peer online and face to face conversations to embed behaviours. **Because of concerns about the amount of time out of school, the presenter will negotiate the second 2 days with participants.** The workshops provide a specific wellbeing lens for AITSL's Australian Professional Standard for Principals professional practice of Developing Self and Others. Attendees will also engage in a pre and post diagnostics that measure improved practice and thinking about wellbeing as a leader.

Contact Angela on astefani@apf.net.au to register. **Last chance to register this week!!!**

Member Feedback - Audits

The APF has recently had contact from a number of members concerned about the number and depth of audits being conducted this year, as well as the true purpose of these audits.

We are grateful for the rapid response from Johnathan Kaplan, Exec Director of DET's Integrity & Assurance Division. He assures us in the following points that the audits are not intended in any way to catch schools out. The audits are critical to supporting the Department to strengthen its assurance of school finances, identify and share good practice and ensure schools have the support they need to deliver sound financial management for their communities.

- In 2015/16, we strengthened the way we audit Department divisions and schools following concerns from VAGO and IBAC about our ability to gain adequate assurance.
- We are running 23 topic audits for Department divisions and six topic audits for schools this year.
- The 'review of key financial management processes at schools' (KFMC) topic audit is underway in schools this Term. Last year, the overall rating for the audit was 'needs improvement', demonstrating that we still have work to do to support stronger financial management in schools.
- Thirty schools were selected, either because they hadn't been audited in a few years or due to unsatisfactory results in the 2015-2016 School Council Financial Audit. Some schools were also recommended by DET finance experts.
- Each school will receive a confidential report relating to compliance with key business process policies and guidelines (revenue, expenses, fixed assets, budgeting etc). The report will outline good practice and any areas for improvement.
- The overall audit report does not identify schools. It groups findings by theme and assesses their root cause. This helps us understand if we need to address issues through system-wide improvements or direct support to individual schools.
- Audits like KFMC provide both the Department and individual schools with an opportunity to continuously review and strengthen our processes.

Schools are welcome to contact our school audit team anytime with questions about this or other school audits on scfa@edumail.vic.gov.au



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0418 551 375

If you become aware of a colleague who is not coping or who needs help, please contact the APF without delay.

We are here to support and offer advice to all members at any time.

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Mark - 0418 551 375

industrialofficer@apf.net.au



John Handley
APF Adviser
0407 557 862

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Super Changes, for the Interested – 2017, Andrew Peters, Semaphore Private

In November 2016, the Government finally legislated the new Super and pension changes. Basically, the system that Howard and Costello had implemented in 2006 was far too generous and with Budget pressure and tax leakage an attempt has been made to reign in the leakage. At Semaphore, we hope we can at least have some certainty around these rules for the next 10 years as we know our clients just hate the uncertainty when it comes to planning for their futures. So in summary here's a snapshot of the new changes and actions:

Pre Tax Super Contributions

If you are under 50 today, you can make Employer Contributions and Salary Sacrifice up to \$30,000 in the 16/17 year – from July it's changing to \$25,000. Remember this includes the Super Guarantee 9.5%, so the amount you can sacrifice in the future will be limited.

If you are over 50, your limit today is \$35,000 – this is also being reduced to \$25,000. Historically this limit was \$100,000 plus – so you can see how Government has well and truly reigned in the tax breaks on Salary Sacrifice.

Actions – if you have the capacity, try and maximise your salary sacrifice as this is your last year for tax breaks, depending on your salary.

Watch out for – your payslip is not necessarily the source of truth for your contributions – you need to talk to your super fund as it's the date the contributions hit the Fund which count, not the date you get paid.

After Tax Super Contributions

Historically, many pre retirees would flood their super fund with after tax dollars – they may have downsized the family home, transferred some shares to super or received an inheritance. These rules are also being tightened from \$180,000 to \$100,000.

There will be a lot of press about this as the "bring forward rules" allow some to contribute \$540,000 per person, subject to what's called your 'super caps' – but only up to 30 June 2017.

So for many – this will be the last chance to flood their super in the lead up to retirement – and remember, "after tax contributions" are not taxed on entry to super and they are treated favourably for your eventual Estate.

Actions – consider the advantages of after tax contributions – but do seek advice as you can't get the money back until retirement.

Watch out for – old contributions that may already be counting – you do not want to breach these limits, the penalties, let alone sorting it out is a minefield.

Transition or Working Pensions

Historically, these were a fantastic tool to allow all those over age 55 to convert their super to pensions and enjoy tax free earnings on the asset base.

Government have now closed this down – from 1 July Transition pensions will be taxed at 15%.

If you are aged under 60, there appears to be little rationale to continue them.

If you are aged over 60, there is an argument you should continue as the pension payments are tax free.

If you've changed employers, seek advice as you may be able to satisfy the rules allowing you to convert your Transition pension to a non taxed Account Based Pension.

Actions – check whether you have a Transition Pension and seek advice on whether you should continue.

Large Account Balances

New limits will apply from 1 July 17, limiting each individual to \$1.6M in Pension phase

Those with old Defined Benefit pensions will also see them counted against this limit

If you are in your 50s today but on track for a large balance – you'll need advice on this or strategies to perhaps slow down one partner of a couple and speed up the other.

Also at 1.6M, you can't add anymore after tax contributions.

Anything over the \$1.6M will need to be either cashed in or commuted back to Super in accumulation phase

From 1 July, we believe this will all be reported via the ATO and MyGov

Actions – if this is you, register now for MyGov (prepare to be frustrated for 2 hours) and definitely seek advice.

Action – if you have an old Defined Benefit pension – you'll need advice on how it is measured against you.

The sleeper – Insurance held within super will count and upon death a couple could have a potential large balance.

Please note – all the above should be taken as General Advice and should not be acted upon unless you have received individual advice specific to your personal circumstances



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member to mention
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book an appointment.

****We are a tax (financial) adviser but we are not a registered tax agent or a tax accountant. We give advice about the likely taxation impacts of advice we provide to you. For other tax-related services you should contact your accountant, book keeper or tax agent.****

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