

**Co-Presenter - Ian Gibson (ABSIA):** Okay I think we've probably given everyone enough time so we'll make a start. I should apologise upfront if anyone hears any snoring in the background that happens to be my dogs. So I just thought I should warn you all in advance.

I'd like to welcome everyone today and I'll start with the Acknowledgment of the Traditional Owners. We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the country throughout Australia and recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and culture. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging. Thank you.

What I'd like to do now is hand it over to Simon Foster. Simon's President of ABSIA. Has been a longstanding member and a longstanding Board member prior to that as well.

And to kick it off, the first question I would pose to Simon is: as President how do you spend your time and what are your priorities for this year?

**Co-Presenter - Simon Foster (ABSIA):** Thank you Ian and welcome everyone. Very happy to be kicking off our Webinar Week and lots of interesting things for you.

So I'll start with the second part of that question, what are our priorities for 2021. So we have an expanded Board now and we've set up a number of sub-committees and we want to continue working with our partners in government and expanding our very strong relationships with the ATO. We also built up relationships with Digital Transformation Agency, Fair Work Commission, Bureau of Statistics, ACCC and Treasury and starting to work with offices of state revenue and it's really important to us to expand that and expand the reach of our members into other agencies. And there a lot of significant activities going on for the next few years, most of which are actually topics in Webinar Week, that are going to impact our members and Digital Service Providers more broadly. In particular, STP Phase 2. We have DTA's Digital Identity framework and Digital Identity more broadly. Federal Government particularly spending hundreds of millions of dollars on that project. Operational Framework review is going on. Work with the Fair Work Commission on the Modern Awards Pay Database so it's taking some of their processes and building APIs on top of what was previously unstructured PDFs. Peppol e-invoicing. I mentioned the Bureau of Statistics, I believe that's going to be announced tomorrow in Webinar Week and it's some really interesting stuff that they're looking to do. Consumer Data Right is also becoming front and centre and impacting our members. So there's lots of things going on.

It's also worth mentioning over the last year JobKeeper, of which this is the final week I believe, our members were very key in getting that done and it was the STP infrastructure and the work on APIs over a decade that enabled that to be possible. And that's led to a change in the frame of mind of government of what can be done with software which is great and we're trying to put ABSIA and ABSIA members at the centre of that. We're also looking at launching more fully into New Zealand. We now have a Board member based in New Zealand, which is Emma Dobson who's formerly of Westpac.

So lots of things going on about providing value to our members. We're also looking at new forums where you can meet each other and exchange views.

In terms of what I spend my time on, it's really two things. One is representing the organisation. There are a number of roles as President of ABSIA that I take on and also communicating both publicly and privately to other organisations, to government agencies and with members. And I also work with our Directors and the various sub-committees we have set up to see what is going on and where they need assistance. And in terms of those sub-committees, we'll start publishing those. You'll see some of this in our newsletter where we talk about what various Board Directors have done in representative activity but also opportunities that members have to get involved be that in e-invoicing, there's a security sub-committee we're also looking at Consumer Data Right. So there's lots of things you can get involved with and lots that we're doing right now.

You're on mute Ian.

**Co-Presenter - Ian Gibson (ABSIA):** Sorry thank you Simon. That sounds exciting. It probably keeps you very busy.

One of the questions people often get posed though is when talking to prospective members, how do you explain to them the benefits of ABSIA and how you can choose to get more involved? And you've already sort of alluded to that second part in your earlier discussion.

**Co-Presenter - Simon Foster (ABSIA):** Thanks Ian. So one of the things I didn't mention there is the great work that our staff, so Maggie and Donna, do when arranging events like Webinar Week but also in policy response. So for members, ABSIA is there to represent you and respond to consultations and put the perspective of the industry, both members and non-members, but obviously you can have a more active involvement we will ask for member input before we make representation to government. But also there's an opportunity to meet your peers and learn what they're doing and not everything has to be competitive. There are opportunities to work together. It might be across different industry sectors where I know syndicates and other sales activity has come from those relationships. But also learn when others are having similar problems to you and so that could be in the phrase of our annual conference which will be later in the year, COVID willing. Things like we do open Zoom sessions, which is to try and meet together. Pre-COVID we had sort of pub meetups. Just small gatherings, unstructured again it's an opportunity to meet other members. And as I mentioned earlier, we're going to start promoting over the next few weeks what our sub-committees are, how you can get involved and we're very very happy to have members involved in those activities.

**Co-Presenter - Ian Gibson (ABSIA):** Excellent, that sounds great.

Now, I want to throw it open to our participants on the webinar to ask questions as well but in order to give them some time, so prior to doing that maybe one more question for you Simon.

You've already alluded to Webinar Week, which of course this is the kick off for, but what can you tell us about this week's webinars. You know why should the people find these interesting, why should they get involved.

**Co-Presenter - Simon Foster (ABSIA):** Sure. So we've got a *inaudible*. So this afternoon we have Megumi Miki who's giving a presentation on Quietly Powerful and maybe Ian you can talk a little bit about that when I'm done. Tomorrow we have Martin Mane from ATO who was Assistant Commissioner for Digital Partnership Office and has been seconded elsewhere but was key in coordinating between Digital Service Providers and our industry and government around things like JobKeeper and COVID response and we were very involved in that process. I mentioned already the ABS. We haven't talked about Modernising Business Registers which is an enormous project going on right now to combine the Australian Business Register, ASIC databases and I think there's 11 other registries into a much more modern, simpler system and Michelle Crosby who is the Deputy Registrar will be presenting that on Wednesday. We have Consumer Data Right. We have Gateway Network Governance Body, which is a superannuation network, talking about cyber security. And Op Framework. And I've missed Fair Work Commission so there's lots of different things there. We've tried to keep the webinars tight for you so they're not going to take up a lot of your day and you'll get packed full of information.

**Co-Presenter - Ian Gibson (ABSIA):** Well I would encourage people on the call to send in their questions via the Q&A function. Whilst they do, I'll just add to Simon's comments.

Megumi Miki, which is later this afternoon, Megumi's been a consultant, she's studied quite a lot and it's not just about the issue of introversion and those sorts of things. It's generally about how do people who sort of aren't necessarily gregarious can get their point across and make themselves heard. And she is very distinguished, published. Her most recent book has won two awards. And I've personally have attended her sessions and I know several ABSIA members who have attended their sessions and they've all sung the praises. So I would encourage everyone to, if you're not already attending that webinar, to do so.

And if I touch upon John Shepherd's webinar tomorrow afternoon, from the ABS. Literally, I'm not sort of underplaying this, but literally what he's talking about is transforming the way the ABS gathers data. So anyone that's remotely interested in that topic, I'd have to say this is a must see webinar.

And lastly, I just wanted to touch upon is securing your future which is the presentation at the end of the week by Michelle where she talks about the major study that the GNGB, and for those that aren't familiar with that acronym it's the governance network for gateways of the Superannuation Transaction Network. She's going to talk about a major study that they did jointly with PwC looking at cyber security within the superannuation industry. ABSIA was involved in that. ABSIA is a supporter and was a founding sponsor for the GNGB when it was kicked off several years ago. So I would equally also encourage people to attend that.

And I'd better just add there is a really interesting speaker that we've got on Thursday at 11 around the Consumer Data Rights. Lisa is a very very well credentialed speaker on this topic. She was involved in Open Banking. she's currently involved in Open Energy. She's written on the topic. She's the CEO of a company that's involved in it. So anyone that's remotely interested with Consumer Data Rights and I don't think there's an ABSIA member that shouldn't be. This is a rare opportunity to talk to someone who is very intimately involved in CDR and can talk with a lot of authority on what's happened, what's happening and informed speculation about what will happen. So maybe if I leave that there.

Simon, we have one question and obviously you've struck a receptive chord when you talked about member involvement. Because the question was around what's the frequency of engagement amongst members and other activities.

**Co-Presenter - Simon Foster (ABSIA):** So great question. There are opportunities almost every week to get engaged. So there's obviously the Webinar Week, we've got this here. But our sub-committees meet regularly. Most of them about once a month. Some of them are open, in fact most of them are open and we welcome contributions by any members.

The other thing that will be happening over the next few months is the Board Directors are going to try and reach out to every one of you and have a conversation and see how can we better help you. I know Donna has been doing that as well, our Operations Manager. And we're very much open for the feedback and for what it is you want to see from this organisation.

Now one of the things we don't do very well in this country is promote ourselves and our successes. And if you look at JobKeeper as I mentioned before, it was pretty unique policy response in Australia compared to the rest of the world. And there's been a question asked, you know why was that? It was because it was possible and that's a combination of technology and the technology providers that come from our members but also what the government has done to enable us via wholesale products.

Australia has, together with New Zealand, the highest penetration of cloud accounting anywhere in the world. It's well into a majority. That enables us in small businesses to do things that other jurisdictions just can't do. And so we're seeing that with ABS and John Shepherd will be talking about that tomorrow.

We have our newsletters. We run webinars. You can get more directly involved in sub-committees. You can stand for the Board. That happens every year around October on our AGMs and we actively encourage that. One of our Board members, that's where it came from. He responded to a new member saying he'd like to get involved. We actively encouraged him to do so and then ended up getting elected.

And I've just had a chat here to point out, this is why we have staff members here to remind us about stuff thank you Donna. We also have an online Forum. It's mostly active on STP where

you can post and discuss. And we have a Slack room as well which you can be invited and we'll make sure the next newsletter sends out a reminder on how you can access all of those things.

**Co-Presenter (ABSIA):** Excellent. Well it would be remiss of me Simon if I didn't take this opportunity to in fact highlight that one of my roles is that I chair the cyber security committee for ABSIA and I would welcome the involvement of any of our members who have an interest in that particular area and we will be posting a notice shortly on the Forum soliciting for people to become involved in the committee. We have a quite an ambitious but not overly aggressive work plan for the year. We have some capacity to take on some more if people have a particular interest outside of the areas we are already focusing on. And I would encourage you that if you are interested reach out. We'd love to get you involved and love to get you on board.

Now I've noticed Simon that we've both gone slightly over time. So maybe we should leave it there in the interests of finishing on time or at least close to. I'd like to thank everyone for their attendance. Simon if there's any last minute information that you wanted to provide. No okay. I would remind everyone that this session has been recorded and will be made available on the ABSIA website over the coming weeks.

And perhaps as a final closing comment, I would encourage everyone to really look at the webinars we have coming up this week. There are some great topics and I'd be very very surprised if there wasn't some things that were of interest and directly relevant to your organisation and these are some great speakers to be able to quiz and question and really probe and find out what it is you need to know.

So perhaps on that mark, I'll leave it there and wish you all of the best for the rest of your week. Thank you.

**Co-Presenter (ABSIA):** Thanks Ian. Thanks everybody.