



By Kassie James

A bend in the road is not the end of the road ... unless you fail to make the turn.

I was on the (then) APLA Council when the decision was made to broaden our objectives and membership base.

At the time I believed that these changes were in the best interests of the association ... although I confess that my resolve wavered somewhat in the course of the 2003 AGM when confronted by some strongly expressed opposition to the changes. Thankfully a few scotches (sadly, not provided during the AGM) went a long way to restoring said resolve.

A major concern of members (myself included) was that the broadening of the objectives and membership base would destroy or dilute our essential 'APLA-ness' – this is not a term that language does justice – but we know what it is – the energy that comes from being with like-minded people who are committed to what they do and for whom they do it.

This year I have attended the Queensland and New South Wales

conferences and can say without doubt that we still have our APLA-ness ... in fact it seemed to me to be more palpable – strengthened by adversity, perhaps, but I think it is more than that.

The broadening of our objectives to include the promotion and protection of human rights and human dignity, such as the rights of refugees and detainees, has given the organisation new energy and purpose.

We will always remain committed to the rights of the injured, but injury can take many forms and there are many who would forego the right to compensation in a heartbeat for the right to freedom, safety, justice and due process.

The broadening of our objectives and membership base has made us a stronger and more invigorated organisation.

It appears we have negotiated the bend in the road ... which is just as well given the parlous state of the motor vehicle compensation system (sorry, had to be said). ■

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