



President's Report 2024/25



PRESIDENT'S REPORT PRESENTED AT
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 6 JUNE 2025
IN PESON & VIRTUAL MEETING

Introduction

It's a pleasure to present this report as we reflect on the activities of the Direct Selling Association of New Zealand over the past year. 2024 has been one of ongoing adaptation and resilience, both for our association and our member companies.

At last year's AGM in May 2024, our long-standing Executive Director, Garth Wyllie, informed the Board of his serious health condition. Sadly, Garth passed away in August. Garth's role as Executive Director involved leading the DSA's day-to-day operations and providing strategic direction, and his loss has significantly impacted the Association.

The Board was immediately faced with the challenge of determining how to fulfil the responsibilities of the Executive Director. This included considering whether to appoint a new Executive Director or have a Board member step in on an interim basis. Garth's deep industry knowledge and global connections were invaluable. His absence has understandably caused concern among some members, including a number of long-standing companies operating across both New Zealand and Australia, who chose to resign their membership. It is likely this was influenced by perceived uncertainty and disruption resulting from the leadership transition and lack of a defined succession plan.

Since August, the Board has been actively working to address these challenges. We have reviewed and updated core documentation, ensured operational continuity, and re-engaged with members. One major strategic focus has been the review of our Constitution. This is now a priority feature of our planning and governance work.

As part of this process, we have also explored the potential for a formal strategic partnership—or possibly a joint venture—with the Direct Selling Association of Australia. Many member companies already operate across both countries, and there are clear synergies in knowledge-sharing and regulatory engagement. While the concept is promising, it will require careful structuring to ensure compliance with the legal, taxation, and operational frameworks of both jurisdictions.

We are actively collaborating with DSAA CEO Geoff Mulham, legal counsel Nina Rossi, and the DSAA Board to define the purpose and scope of such a partnership. Member consultation will be an important part of this process, and we are committed to keeping you informed and involved as we progress.

Celebrating 50 Years of DSA New Zealand

In November 2024, the Direct Selling Association of New Zealand proudly celebrated its 50th anniversary. This milestone event also featured a posthumous induction of our late Executive Director, Garth Wyllie, into the DSA Hall of Fame. A commemorative plaque was presented to Garth's son, Daniel, with Garth's two sisters also in attendance.

We were also honoured to have the presence of Tamuna Gabilala, Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer of WFDSA join us for this celebration.

Garth was further honoured on the global stage at the 2024 WFDSA World Congress in Dubai.

We extend our sincere thanks to our Australian colleague and friend, David Raphael, who played a key role in organising the event. Special thanks also to Geoff Mulham, CEO of DSAA, for travelling to New Zealand to attend, and to all DSA members who joined us in this important celebration.

Advocacy and Representation

The DSA continues to represent and advocate on behalf of its members, particularly in relation to legislative changes that could impact our industry.

A major focus this year was the repeal of the **Therapeutic Products Act 2023**, originally passed under the previous Labour government. The Act faced strong opposition from the natural health industry, including many of our members, who submitted feedback that was ultimately disregarded.

In response, the DSA supported the Natural Health Alliance in a targeted political lobbying campaign which successfully secured cross-party backing for the repeal of the Act. With the Act now repealed, the government has initiated a review of the **Medicines Act 1981** and is exploring a new regulatory framework for natural health products.

It is now essential that we remain vigilant to ensure that future legislation does not inappropriately capture or restrict the natural health sector. The DSA will closely monitor developments and advocate strongly to protect the interests of our members.

Membership

As noted earlier, the DSA experienced a decline in membership during the 2024–2025 year.

While this is disappointing, we remain committed to maintaining the integrity and credibility of our Association. Membership is only granted to companies that meet the high ethical standards of our Code of Practice, in alignment with the global standards set by the World Federation of Direct Selling Associations (WFDSA). All new applications are assessed rigorously to ensure compliance.

Code of Practice

Our Code of Practice continues to serve as a gold standard for ethical conduct in our industry and is endorsed by the Ministry of Consumer Affairs. We are pleased to report that no complaints were lodged against any of our member companies during the 2024 calendar year.

Financial Position

The Association remains in a healthy financial position and continues to post a positive cash balance in 2025.

WFDSA Participation

The Direct Selling Association of New Zealand has been a foundational member of the WFDSA and an active participant in its governance and development.

Garth Wyllie held the role of Chairman of Association Services for the WFDSA—a position of significant responsibility, which included:

- Oversight of the global statistical reporting programme
- Supporting the development of emerging DSAs around the world

- Leading enhancements to the International Code of Practice
- Providing training and upskilling initiatives for DSAs worldwide

His appointment to this role was a testament to New Zealand's credibility and influence in the global direct selling community.

Following his passing, we are currently unable to continue in that leadership role, but we remain committed to participating in the WFDSA and supporting its mission.

We are also proud to confirm that DSA New Zealand has retained its Platinum Status—the highest level of recognition within the WFDSA framework—even as the criteria have become more stringent.

Recognition of Board

It has been a privilege to serve as President of the DSA, and I am grateful for the continued support and trust of our members.

I extend my sincere thanks to the Board for their commitment and contributions over the past year. I would especially like to acknowledge Kimball Hobby, who despite being based in Australia and recovering from an injury, has remained actively engaged by attending meetings virtually.

A special thank you also to Carla Swan, whose dedication and hard work have been instrumental in supporting the Board and ensuring the smooth operation of the Association.

On behalf of the Board and myself, I express my deepest appreciation for your ongoing involvement with the Direct Selling Association of New Zealand. Your support is vital to our success, and we remain committed to providing the service, representation, and leadership that you rightfully expect as member companies.



Patrick Fahy – President

DSA New Zealand

5 June 2025