

November in summary

In this month's edition of *Current Affairs in Auditing*, we have examined various aspects of reform. The events described in this month's edition follow a familiar pattern.

- Reforms such as those proposed by APRA tend to be draconian.
- A period of vigorous lobbying to water down the reforms follows, as evidenced by the profession's reaction to the provisions included in the draft Bill.
- Thereafter, media comment in the form of editorials and commentary occurs.

We will have to wait and see the outcome of this politicised process to reform. However, the accounting and auditing profession would be unwise to pursue a campaign that appears to be more motivated by self-interest than quality auditing. Nor should the profession underestimate public anger against it. At the moment, that anger may not be overt, but it could suddenly re-ignite at the first sign of bad publicity for auditors. The profession should remember David Tweedie's comment that it could become extinct if it succumbed to pressure by clients and approved dodgy accounts (Gettler, *et al.*, 2003, p.1). The auditors would be well advised to follow up long-term strategy by adopting measures designed to ensure quality auditing. In this way, their survival is guaranteed.

Reference

Gettler, Leon and Ravlic, Tom 2003, 'Spineless auditors could kill off the profession: standards chief says', *The Age: Business*, 7 August, p.1.