

oceanic food *in the media*

around the trade

In-house lawyer a sign of the times

August 2003 signifies a 25 year milestone for Oceanic Food. The company established in 1978 by Mr Cyril Lee (in partnership), is today a national marketer and distributor of well known brands such as Le Ocean, Lotus, Kaioh and Oceanic, operating from a purpose-built 1,000 tonne cold storage facility in Ashburton, Melbourne.

As with many food companies, Oceanic Food is a family run business with Cyril's son Victor joining in 1989 and Vincent most recently in 2002. In addition to adding a few hands, the brothers also bring their professional experience to the business: Victor being an accountant and Vincent as a lawyer who utilises his qualification as the company's in-house legal expert with the appropriate title of General Counsel.

Although uncommon in small to medium businesses, the appointment of a General Counsel within a company is a sign of the complex and potentially hazardous business environment which now exists.



Vincent Lee who has joined the family business as General Counsel

"It is an investment in the long term future of the business and a fantastic opportunity to practice in a commercial area that is undergoing substantial legal evolution."

"With increasingly onerous international and local supply arrangements, the pending introduction of legislated regulatory regimes, adoption of prescribed standards and trade practice requirements, the utility of an in-house lawyer to spot issues and solve them before they create legal or worse - litigious nightmares - is

invaluable," said Vincent.

"Although these issues could be solved by an external lawyer, being involved in the day to day operations of the business makes navigating the legal minefield inherent in today's environment, much less difficult," he said. "For our customers, this translates to greater confidence in our business and product brands from Oceanic Food."

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