

## YOUNG GUNS 2017



# YOUNG GUNS

Meet 50 young professionals making their mark on insurance

**WELCOME TO** the 2017 *Insurance Business* Young Guns report.

Recently, we turned to our readers and asked you to tell us about the up-and-comers in your businesses – the talented young insurance professionals on track to be tomorrow's leaders. Once again, we were delighted to receive a plethora of top-calibre entries from across Australia. Needless to say, assessing the entries and deciding on those who would be profiled was an arduous process.

In this year's report, you will have the opportunity to become acquainted with 50 rising stars of insurance in Australia and to find out how they have attracted the attention of their colleagues.

The insurance industry needs a consistent flow of candidates entering the sector and bringing with them the skills and the know-how not only to keep the wheels turning, but also to ensure it can deliver to customers in accordance with their evolving expectations. We are certain you will agree that the talented individuals who appear on the pages that follow are the kinds of industry professionals we can be confident will lead and continue to better our industry tomorrow and beyond.

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## CALLAN DRUMMOND

Senior account executive

AUSTRAL INSURANCE BROKERS PTY LTD  
TRADING AS AUSTRAL RISK SERVICES

Age: 32

Callan Drummond has earned remarkable praise from both clients and colleagues for his work as a broker. He plays a key role at Austral in business development, and he's described as an influencer, a decision-maker, a motivator and a team player, who demonstrates the highest level of honesty and integrity and has ethics beyond reproach. On top of that, Drummond is described as having demonstrated business acumen beyond his years. He entered the insurance industry as a trainee at the age of 19 and has now clocked up over 13 years' experience in broking. One colleague told *Insurance Business* Drummond is known for his impressive insurance knowledge and service, while a client said he's always willing to go the extra mile to help their company secure the right cover. During his career, he's been chosen to participate in QBE's Equip Program and Zurich's exchange program and, in 2014, was a WA finalist for NIBA's Young Broker of the Year Award.



## KRISTINE SALGADO

Account director – financial and executive risks

WILLIS TOWERS WATSON

Age: 31

Kristine Salgado is a firm believer in an exciting future for the industry. In fact, exploiting the exciting opportunities in insurance was the subject of her winning entry in the inaugural APiG Wotton + Kearney Scholarship. Salgado joined Willis in 2009, progressing from a graduate broker to an account director, and now a senior member of the FINEX team, managing a portfolio of large corporate clients. Greatly respected and considered a genuinely innovative, natural leader, she's also actively involved in numerous business improvement projects, regularly develops thought leadership and educational material for clients, and assists in training and mentoring team members. Salgado has been heavily involved in creating a strong YP network in the business, championing the involvement of young brokers in the strategic direction of the company.

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**BRIDGET BAKER**

Underwriter

**SPORTSCOVER AUSTRALIA**Age: **25**

Straight after finishing school, Bridget Baker began a traineeship with Sportscover and quickly established herself as a highly valuable member of the underwriting team. In fact, she impressed with her aptitude and ability so much so that she was promoted three times within a five-year period. Said to be instrumental in developing key new relationships for the business, her responsibilities include some of Sportscover's major accounts and the underwriting of complex risks. Her ability to build relationships and demonstrate integrity in her dealings with brokers has ensured that brokers can quickly and

confidently provide information to their own clients. Baker is described as having a drive and determination to succeed in everything she does and showing a deep commitment to personal development and increasing her industry knowledge. She has been earmarked by the company for higher management responsibility in the future, owing to Sportscover's belief in her abilities and commitment.

**RENEE BETTON**

WA underwriting manager

**CHU UNDERWRITING AGENCIES**Age: **25**

In January 2016, Renee Betton was appointed to her current role, leading and managing the underwriting and customer service team to provide strata solutions to CHU's customers. She's responsible for a team of five underwriters and three customer service consultants, and coaches and develops each team member to achieve performance and personal development goals. Beyond her team, Betton is said to have become a role model to the wider WA branch and to possess a natural flair for leading and upskilling her co-workers. She challenges her team to be innovative, to find underwriting solutions and to strive to provide the best customer service. Feedback on service turnaround times has been impressive. Betton has twice been named CHU's WA Employee of the Year (in 2013 and 2015) and is this year completing QBE's Equip Program. She's said to be looking forward to the disruption ahead in both the insurance and strata industry.

**BEN ALLEN**

Liability underwriter

**HIGH STREET UNDERWRITING AGENCY**Age: **29**

Ben Allen plays an integral role in High Street Underwriting's business, working with its Lloyd's syndicates and Lloyd's broker to develop and expand the agency's product lines.

His in-depth understanding of the technical aspects of policy wordings is said to have been of great benefit to the agency's business and, in 2017, Allen was the recipient of High Street Underwriting's Underwriter of the Year Award. Aspiring to build the agency's suite of products to encompass aviation style risks and to work as an underwriter in the London market, Allen is described as a consummate professional who is passionate about insurance. While still a younger member of the industry, he's a mentor and considered a 'go-to' person by several of the younger staff – and sometimes, even some of the older team members – in the agency. Not only is Allen determined to expand his own knowledge, but is similarly determined to share it with others.

**DAMIAN BURLEY**

Victoria sales leader

**MARSH**Age: **32**

Damian Burley's commitment to his work has seen him recognised with an accelerated path to leadership. Today, he leads business development in Victoria for Marsh's largest client segment, Risk Management. In collaboration with Marsh's national sales leaders, he has oversight of all RM prospective clients, including Australia's largest private and public companies. Highlights of Burley's career include having secured the business of a major energy and power company on a multi-year appointment outside of the standard tender process, as well as successfully defending two of the largest risk managed clients, which resulted in three-year reappointments. He's taken a proactive role in developing colleagues for several years, seeking opportunities to assist others through mentoring. Notably, two of his long-term mentees have succeeded in earning promotions internally, both interstate and overseas. Looking ahead, Burley's aim is to take on additional responsibilities with the ultimate goal of holding a strategic national senior leadership role.





## CHLOE BURNS

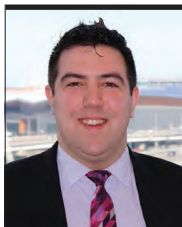
Insurance adviser

INSURANCE ADVISERNET

Age: 25

At 22, Chloe Burns became one of the youngest insurance advisers to be accepted by Insurance Advisernet Australia as a stand-alone corporate

authorised representative practice. A senior colleague described her attitude and business plan as "exceptional", making an outstanding contribution to the network and her clients. Within two and a half years, she's built a strong portfolio of clients and last year her business was awarded 'Platinum Practice' status for its achievement of high standards within IA's best practice framework. Burns also completed IA's Academy Program last year and, in 2017, was part of the winning IA team that took out Allianz's prestigious Young Eagle title. She wants to be an inspiration to the next generation of female advisers and champions the progress of women's influence in insurance. Her colleague believes Burns will "continue to grow, develop and refine her business to set the benchmark many others in our industry aspire to!"



## BENJAMIN BRISCOE

Senior underwriter – CTP fleets and commercial

ALLIANZ AUSTRALIA INSURANCE

Age: 27

He's been described by one senior colleague as "a clear thinker, good listener, team player,

hard worker and, above all, a confident young professional who would be an asset to any organisation". Ben Briscoe is senior underwriter in Allianz Australia's Retail Distribution Division, supporting the commercial insurance needs of its dealer and fleet leasing partners and driving product and strategy for its fleet leasing channel. In recent times, he's been responsible for designing and delivering tailored insurance solutions to support some of the business's largest partners, and has created an additional portfolio of \$20m of new business in the process. Among his achievements, Briscoe was the 2014 Ron Shorter Memorial Award winner, the 2015 Allianz High Performance Award winner, and has underwritten more than \$1m in new business for each of the last three years. He trains and mentors other underwriters within the business and, outside of insurance, is a volunteer for The Smith Family, mentoring high school students on transition from school life to work or further education. Briscoe hopes to continue building his skills through engagement in cross-divisional projects on next generation insurance products, including driverless cars, drones and cyber insurance solutions.



## LOUISE CLARKE

Bid manager

JLT

Age: 26

Louise Clarke supports and assists brokers in new business opportunities. Her role involves creating opportunities through networking, as well as working closely with brokers to present a bespoke offering relevant to the client's or prospect's needs. She's described by one senior colleague as not afraid to challenge the

status quo, asking questions "in the pursuit of excellence". Clarke is well respected both within the office and in the wider industry. She's a member of NIBA's WA Young Professionals committee, working to help young members of the insurance space develop the skills they require. Clarke is also passionate about affecting positive change in insurance through greater diversity, reflected in her leadership of the WA committee for the Dive In Festival. She's determined to further grow her insurance knowledge, in order to support her passion for sales and business development. "I look forward to watching her develop in the industry throughout the years to come," Clarke's colleague tells *Insurance Business*.



## TRAVIS CHUNG

Director

FP INSURANCE BROKERS

Age: 30

Travis Chung is the executive director of a small insurance brokerage based in North Melbourne. Previously a university tutor and lecturer, and also a qualified CPA and CIP, his language skills have assisted in promoting general risk products to the Mandarin- and Cantonese-speaking community.

Chung is described by one colleague as "incredibly motivated and conscientious" and someone firmly focused on client value and satisfaction. "Whether it's a 6am call or a 2am text, Travis will assist the client or other party to the best of his ability," his colleague tells *Insurance Business*. Chung is also said to spend considerable time guiding his staff, helping to improve their technical and interpersonal skills so that each member of the team is capable of offering a high standard of service to clients. His goals for the coming years include continuing to grow the company's book, and to better understand clients' operations, in order to be able to provide a more personal and tailored service.



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**ANDREW BOURKE**

Managing director

**DYNAMIC INSURANCE BROKERS**Age: **33**

Andrew Bourke is the managing director of Dynamic Insurance Brokers in South Australia, managing a team of three staff and a portfolio of commercial and corporate insurance accounts. In 2008, Bourke received the National Insurance Broker Association's (NIBA's) Young Professional Broker of the Year Award for SA and NT. He was also NIBA YP SA chairman between 2009 and 2011, and has featured on *Insurance Business's* Elite Brokers list twice (including our 2017 list). Bourke's aim is to grow his business, as well as develop and train the future generation of insurance professionals.

**NICK DAFFY**

Senior account manager and team leader

**PNO INSURANCE**Age: **30**

Nick Daffy joined PNO Insurance last September after almost 10 years with Arthur J. Gallagher (formerly OAMPS Insurance Brokers) in Horsham and Melbourne. Within six months of joining PNO, he was appointed a team leader. Daffy was a top 5 rookie broker at OAMPS and, last year, was named one of three Vic/Tas finalists for NIBA's Young Broker of the Year Award. He's also a member of the Vic/Tas NIBA YP committee, involved in the planning and execution of industry events, where he secures strong speakers to present on emerging and challenging risks. Daffy is passionate about giving back to the local community. At OAMPS, he was the youngest member in the Juno Program, where he mentored underprivileged, under-resourced individuals, coaching them in their search for employment.

**PETER CRANEY**

Senior associate

**KENNEDYS**Age: **30**

Peter Craney is a lawyer in the Sydney office of global law firm Kennedys, recently promoted to senior associate. His seven years' experience in the legal profession encompasses work in both Australia and the UK, and he specialises in marine, liability and property insurance law. He advises on marine and aviation cargo, hull and liability sub lines for various Australian and overseas market marine insurers and reinsurers, and has a developing practice in cyber insurance. Craney is the current treasurer of the NSW branch of the Maritime Law Association of Australia and New Zealand and

is a committee member and head of the Sydney Marine Discussion Group's events subcommittee. He's also the vice-chair – and only lawyer invited to be involved – in the newly incorporated representative body, the Institute of Marine Insurance Professionals. According to one colleague, he's played a significant guiding and advisory role in the establishment of that group. Craney aspires to be a partner of Kennedys and to lead its domestic push in the development and use of legaltech and insurtech in legal service to the insurance industry.

**DANIEL CURNOW**

Partner

**CENTREWEST INSURANCE BROKERS**Age: **32**

Daniel Curnow manages a diverse portfolio of clients of all sizes across all classes of insurance. Buying into the Perth-based Centrewest Insurance Brokers at the age of 28 saw him fulfil a long-term career dream significantly earlier than anticipated. Curnow has played an integral role in the management team at the brokerage during a period over which the business has tripled in size. A colleague describes Curnow's becoming a shareholder in Centrewest as "unequivocally display[ing] his commitment to the business". That colleague also tells *Insurance Business* that Curnow

has "continued to grow as an excellent insurance broker". In May, Curnow was named as one of three WA finalists for NIBA's 2017 Young Broker of the Year Award. In times ahead, he hopes to continue to increase his ownership position in the brokerage and help Centrewest grow to become a major name in insurance broking in WA.



## PAULA EGGERS

Northern Territory state executive

**MARSH**

Age: **33**

Paula Eggers is a trusted adviser to her clients and well respected by underwriters, and has been described by one senior colleague as “a major asset to the insurance industry”. She was recently appointed Marsh’s state executive for the Northern Territory, with her responsibilities including new business, client service and retention, and managing and mentoring colleagues. Over her time in the business, Eggers has been chosen for a number of accelerated leadership programs and has presented at NIBA’s annual convention as a specialist in the area of uranium and nuclear energy. She’s also gained a wealth of experience working for a number of leading

global brokerages and her time in the industry has encompassed extensive travel, in order to serve global clients. This year, Eggers has been named a state finalist in NIBA’s Young Broker of the Year Award. Outside of insurance, her passion for giving back sees her regularly volunteering her time for a range of bodies, including the Alzheimer’s Association, the RSPCA and the Variety Club.



## TRAVIS DALE

Head of operations – Australia and New Zealand

**CLAIM CENTRAL CONSOLIDATED**

Age: **28**

Travis Dale is described as a natural born leader and an innovative and strategic thinker, who possesses a wonderful ability to develop strong teams to drive positive outcomes for the business. Ten years ago, he joined Claim Central, a claims management service provider that was recently named by the AFR as the eighth most innovative company in Australia. Today, Dale is responsible for all aspects of onshore and offshore operational performance, continuous improvement, strategic projects and the P&L budget across all Claim Central Consolidated businesses, working with key service leaders. He played an instrumental role in the development and implementation of the organisation’s world-first digital claims management solution, ClaimLogik, as well as enhancements to the platform. His key achievements to date also include the development of Claim Central’s Lifecycle tracker – a single source of truth for its cycle time performance – and the co-development of a refreshed business strategy, which has seen improving operational efficiency and set the organisation apart from competitors with market-leading claims turnaround times. His overarching career goal is to see Claim Central Consolidated recognised as an innovative and progressive thought leader in the insurance industry.



## AHMED FARAG

Senior casualty underwriter

**SWISS RE CORPORATE SOLUTIONS**

Age: **33**

One colleague describes him as a “genuine guy” who is “not only interested in delivering commercial success, but is also an outstanding advocate for our industry”. Meanwhile, a broker partner has praised his professionalism and attitude and told *Insurance Business*, “We need more underwriters like him.” Ahmed Farag manages the profitability of Swiss Re Corporate Solutions’ liability portfolio nationally and is also responsible for driving market development and strategy for the casualty portfolio. He plays a leadership role in sharing knowledge and educating fellow team members and brokers on

casualty underwriting issues, as well as public and product liabilities and exposures. Over the course of his career, Farag has been nominated for numerous awards, recognised as a rising star of the industry. His colleague further says he uses his “incredible knowledge to support his broker partners to deliver customer-centric solutions – a rare trait in a market that often descends into a ‘one size fits all’ mentality”.



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## TIFFANY GUNNER

Client services manager – west

EBM/RENTCOVER

Age: 31

Tiffany Gunner supports her team in delivering outstanding levels of customer service. Her current role requires her to provide leadership, direction and ongoing coaching and development to her team members, to ensure each of them is contributing to meeting company targets. Gunner began her insurance career in 2012 as an administration assistant and has since taken on a variety of roles. One colleague told *Insurance Business* he met Gunner through her broking role, where she stood out for her professionalism, knowledge, ability to manage clients, and attention to detail. "She has tremendous drive and passion for the industry," the colleague says, adding that Gunner works hard to have a positive impact across the whole organisation. "She finds satisfaction in breaking barriers and stretching herself to move outside of her comfort zones ... She is and will continue to be an inspiring manager and person within the industry."



## ARTHUR HATZINIKOLIS

Account executive

AUSTBROKERS SPT

Age: 27

He demonstrates a consistent approach to providing 'above and beyond' customer service and has achieved record-breaking service, sales and income results. Arthur Hatzinikolis is a senior account executive in the Austbrokers SPT team in southern Sydney and, last year, was a participant in the 2016 QBE Equip Program. He's said to be "relentless" when it comes to pursuing "tailored, effective, comprehensive and competitive insurance solutions" for his clients. Among his key achievements, Hatzinikolis has overseen the tripling in size of the SPT in-house private pleasurecraft insurance portfolio. He's described by one industry colleague as always displaying a professional attitude, being highly efficient and possessing an in-depth knowledge of insurance products. "Arthur is no doubt a leading broker in his field and a great asset to the broking industry," the colleague tells *Insurance Business*.



## ZOE EVANS

Senior account executive, Canberra

ARTHUR J. GALLAGHER

Age: 33

Zoe Evans has enjoyed what's been described as a "spectacular rise" with Arthur J. Gallagher in Canberra, swiftly working her way through the ranks to her current senior account executive role. *Insurance Business* understands this substantial success comes from Evans' commitment to client advocacy and education, and her technical knowledge coupled with sales acumen. Evans consistently demonstrates unwavering commitment to exceeding clients' expectations and one senior colleague has even described her client retention levels as "extraordinary". Over the past two years, she has grown her book significantly, unlocking opportunities that might otherwise have gone elsewhere. Because of her exceptional results, Evans is highly regarded within the Australian business, but her success has also been noticed at a global level – Evans has secured a highly prized invitation to represent Australia at the biennial global 'Power of Gallagher' event in Las Vegas.



## JAMES FLETCHER

Director

MALTON ROAD

Age: 33

In 2015, James Fletcher started his own business, Malton Road Advisory, which is part of the Westcourt General Insurance Brokers network. "It's amazing to see how many people within our network have been able to build successful businesses through effective planning, determination, perseverance and proper network," one of Fletcher's Westcourt/NAS colleagues told *Insurance Business*. "James is certainly leading the way in a lot of these

aspects, and for any newer ARs who join our network, Malton Road Advisory is a business they should aspire to." Last year, Fletcher was a state finalist for best performing AR in the Westcourt network. His business achieved almost 100% growth in its second year of operation and is on track to double this in 18 months. Fletcher is also said to be generous with his time and will offer support to any AR within the network who requires it. Ongoing, he mentors new and existing ARs.





## HINADA MARTIN

Operations manager

QUS – STRATA INSURANCE

Age: 26

Hinada Martin joined QUS in 2015 as an underwriter. Over the past two years, she's quickly progressed to team leader and today is its operations manager, as well as being tasked with managing the underwriting service team. In her role on the QUS senior leadership team, Martin has played a crucial part in the implementation and management of recent organisation projects, including QUS's work-from-home initiative. Last year, the business abolished set work hours, empowering staff to choose when, how and from where they wished to work. The initiative has been the catalyst for increased employee satisfaction and retention, and it was Martin's task to ensure the success of its implementation. And according to a superior, she's done an "exceptional job" in the execution of this important project. Martin looks forward to continuing to play her role in the ever-growing success of her team and the wider QUS organisation.

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## GEORGE KWASI WINFULL

Account executive

ARTHUR J. GALLAGHER

Age: 30

George Kwasi Winfull is an approachable character who's constantly looking to learn and goes out of his way to meet client needs. An account executive in the Sydney branch of Arthur J. Gallagher's financial and professional risks team, he provides support and advisory services to large corporate and professional services firms, including ASX 200 organisations. After becoming a broker seven years ago, Winfull joined AJG in 2014 and has become one of the company's youngest product champions. He's also part of the AJG internal training group, which develops the skills of young AJG brokers, and an active member of the Lloyd's Australia Development Group for young IPs. A senior colleague says that since day one at AJG, Winfull has displayed a high level of enthusiasm and work ethic. "George certainly has the necessary skills to progress far in this industry," his colleague says.



## RACHEL LILLIOTT

Operations

ATC INSURANCE SOLUTIONS

Age: 31

Rachel Lillioth is another hard-working young insurance professional considered by colleagues to be one to watch. She began her career as a broker services consultant with Lumley in 2010 and, today, as part of ATC's Melbourne team, is tasked with maintaining and building her portfolio in the construction/mobile plant and machinery space. Lillioth is passionate about the importance of providing exceptional customer service to her panel of brokers while ensuring she maintains a profitable portfolio. She's also passionate about making a career in insurance and is a senior member of the Young Insurance Professionals (YIPs). Having undertaken a number of roles within YIPs over the past two years, she's currently joint Australasian vice president, and is committed to helping those new to the industry with their own career aspirations and in improving their understanding of insurance. It's the enthusiasm and drive of young professionals like Lillioth that will help raise the profile of insurance among young jobseekers.



## REENA PURBA

Senior underwriter – financial lines

CHUBB

Age: 29

Reena Purba is a senior underwriter in Chubb's financial lines team, overseeing a portfolio that encompasses multiple lines of business, including D&O, professional indemnity, crime, financial institutions and cyber. That portfolio is made up of large, complex businesses, including some flagship client accounts and multinational placements. Playing a key role in the growth of the cyber portfolio, Purba has been involved in constructing a new cyber scheme with a global insurance broker partner. She's also been involved in several educational seminars and presentations across the market for broking partners and clients, in order to educate them about a variety of subjects. Purba has also assisted her underwriting colleagues in expanding their own knowledge base by conducting professional indemnity training for those colleagues. Looking ahead, she hopes to become a mentor to other young insurance professionals and is keen to support women in their endeavours to pursue successful insurance careers. On that front, she certainly looks to lead by example.



## WINSTON HEADFORD

Development manager, corporate – broker distribution

QBE INSURANCE

Age: 29

Winston Headford began his career in insurance three and a half years ago, joining the industry after working in the legal profession as both a paralegal and then a solicitor. He commenced QBE's Graduate Program in 2014 and has since advanced quickly, now undertaking the role of corporate development manager in the insurer's intermediary distribution division and tasked with achieving sustainable business growth and product diversification alongside managing the existing book of business. Headford is a member of the YP committee of the Australian Insurance Law Association, which organises networking and educational events for young insurance professionals including brokers, underwriters, lawyers, claims handlers and insurance service providers. He recently participated in the NIBA Mentoring Program and is keenly interested in encouraging other young professionals to join the industry. When it comes to times ahead, Headford would like to explore insurance markets outside of Australia and hopes to be considered for inclusion in QBE's Global Leadership Academy.





## ANIRUDH KAKULAPATI

Chief disruptor

CHUISAVER UNDERWRITING AGENCY

Age: 35

Anirudh Kakulapati joined CHU in 2008 as a data entry officer in the claims department of its Melbourne office. Now, he is the newest member of the CHU senior leadership team, having been appointed to the role of chief disruptor of CHU's

innovation lab, CHUISAVER. In recent times, Kakulapati has held the role of service manager in Queensland, responsible for managing the CHU Queensland underwriting and customer service team, and has racked up a number of impressive achievements. Under his management, CHU's Qld team has exceeded its budgets for three consecutive years, his team has exceeded its new business budget by \$9m, and both policy count and net promoter scores have risen considerably. Additionally, he was recently nominated for the Council of Queensland Insurance Brokers' (CQIB's) Mick Lambert Baker Award, presented to the staff member of a CQIB business partner for 'service above and beyond'. Kakulapati has aspirations of taking his career into the stratosphere, with a personal goal of being a company CEO by age 40. One senior colleague tells *Insurance Business*, "I have no doubt he will achieve his goal ... He is certainly someone to watch as the industry evolves into the digital future."



## LEIGH MOULDEN

Director and principal

DOREEN INSURANCE SOLUTIONS  
(CAR OF INSURANCE ADVISERNET)

Age: 31

Leigh Moulden is principal of Doreen Insurance Solutions, a CAR of Insurance Advisernet. A broker since 2009, he's taken part in the IAA and

QBE Excel Program as well as the Allianz Young Eagle Program, and began his own business three years ago. In 2015, Moulden was nominated for IA's AR of the Year award and, this year, his business has received Platinum Practice status within the IA network. Since establishing the business, he's achieved extremely impressive growth and a high retention rate, and a senior colleague describes him to *Insurance Business* as having built "a superb insurance practice in a very short timeframe. His growth year in, year out has exceeded our expectations and this is without compromise to the quality of service and advice he provides his clients". Moulden has also taken on a role within NIBA's YP Committee and is said to be always willing to lend a hand to a fellow AR or adviser within the IA network.



## DES PARTRIDGE

Underwriter – crisis management

XL CATLIN

Age: 31

Des Partridge is XL Catlin's full-time product recall underwriter in Australia and has achieved a high retention rate in his first full year in that role. In addition, he is responsible for driving XL Catlin's

annual Knowledge Hub series, a three-state roadshow designed to educate and facilitate discussion of the topical issues and challenges facing the industry. His involvement in this has seen Partridge play an instrumental role in bringing awareness of crisis management and product recall solutions to the Australian insurance market. He is currently planning the launch of the 2017 series. Partridge strives to achieve broad expertise across all business classes, diversifying his skillset beyond underwriting and using innovative ideas to maximise process effectiveness. On top of that, he is a keen advocate of innovation and making change happen and is described by one colleague as "an obvious asset to XL Catlin".



## PETER MURDOCCA

Southern region manager/senior underwriter

ACCIDENT AND HEALTH INTERNATIONAL

Age: 34

Since joining AHL in 2010, Peter Murdocca has been a regular standout performer, highly respected by his insurance colleagues in and outside of the organisation. Since 2015, he's been responsible for AHL's operations across Victoria, SA, Tas and the NT, managing the portfolio of existing business in

the region with a key focus on growth and sustainability. One of the youngest to have taken on his current role, Murdocca has achieved beyond expectations; he's successfully grown the southern portfolio by exceeding his team's increasing budget and KPIs by more than 10% each year. It's said that no job is too tough for Murdocca and that the business regularly receives positive endorsements of him and his team from both brokers and policyholders. He also spends considerable time mentoring his team and younger staff in the business. An extremely high achiever, he aims to be in AHL's senior leadership team within five years – a goal which is supported by its current leaders, who have developed a strong career pathway for Murdocca.



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**DANIEL JOINER**

Senior development underwriter

**MECON INSURANCE**Age: **28**

Beginning his insurance career as a broker, Daniel Joiner then joined Mecon Insurance as an assistant underwriter. Rapidly contributing to the success and growth of the agency's Melbourne branch, he soon became an underwriter and, in early 2015, he began managing Mecon's WA portfolio, which has since achieved substantial and sustained growth. A senior colleague describes Joiner as an asset to Mecon and someone who shows "true commitment to the industry with his natural enthusiasm". Part of his current role involves providing NIBA CPD-accredited presentations, which offer brokers training in contract works insurance and contractor plant insurance. He regularly attends industry events and is keen to continue expanding his insurance knowledge. Ultimately, Joiner hopes for a long and enjoyable career in insurance and while he may eventually look to pursue a national role, he's currently focused on growing Mecon Insurance's reputation in WA as a well-respected and reputable insurer of choice for contract works insurance and contractor plant insurance.

**GEORGE RUKA**State claims manager  
Vic/Tas**JLT**Age: **35**

George Ruka is legally trained with an MBA specialising

in leadership. His insurance career began in 2011 in QBE's Graduate Program. In late 2013, he was headhunted to become divisional manager of Echelon Claims Service (a JLT subsidiary) and, in 2015, he was promoted to state claims manager of Victoria. Last year, his responsibilities expanded to encompass Tasmania, and he is now responsible for 27 claims staff. His swift progress through the ranks owes to Ruka's track record of results at each stage and the demonstrated improvements of the claims teams he has led. According to one senior colleague, "George's leadership and inspiration as a manager has greatly benefited all those fortunate to work with him". Ruka has also been invited to sit on a steering committee within JLT, overseeing an international efficiency project. Ultimately, he's interested in using his insurance, business and legal skills in the non-profit sector and has a special interest in microfinance organisations and programs that benefit the poorest communities around the world.

**ADAM KORTH**

Senior account manager

**RODERICK INSURANCE BROKERS**Age: **27**

An invaluable member of the Roderick Insurance Brokers team, Adam Korth manages a diverse portfolio ranging from high-end commercial policies to large domestic accounts, and since last year he's increased the overall income of his portfolio by 30%. One senior colleague tells *Insurance Business* that Korth's technical knowledge and understanding of the insurance industry is "outstanding, particularly for someone so young". Additionally, he says Korth's "strong desire to ensure his clients receive the best cover is exceptional" and that that level of service isn't limited to policy matters but includes his management of clients' claims. Among his other key achievements, Korth has achieved successful claims outcomes for three clients through FOS, has recorded impressive new business income in recent times, and has successfully completed QBE's Equip Program. Korth's longer-term goals including completing an MBA, in order to broaden his business acumen, and improving his technical expertise across a wider range of industries.

**HOLLY WILLIAMS**

Customer value manager

**BIZCOVER**Age: **27**

Holly Williams joined BizCover after six years in the general insurance sector. She has responsibility for driving initiatives that ensure BizCover's customer centricity. She also manages a team across multiple functions of the business, including service processing, call centre, retention, collections and claims. Recently, she has been integral in the launch and rollout of BizFunding, Bizcover's monthly instalment funding initiative. Williams continually strives to improve BizCover's processes and procedures by making it easier to do business with the organisation. One senior colleague says Williams is a key leader within BizCover and a strong mentor to many new members of her team.



## MARK LUCKIN

Associate – financial lines

LOCKTON COMPANIES AUSTRALIA

Age: 28

After completing university studies in law, Mark Luckin embarked on a career in insurance. Today, he's heading up Lockton's financial lines and cyber team. Luckin has been with LCA for more than three years now and is described as being a dedicated and enthusiastic employee, well respected among his peers and colleagues, as well as being held in high regard for his professionalism in the wider Australian professional lines sector. Among his achievements, Luckin has authored white papers related to the subject of financial lines of insurance. A young professional contributing above and beyond, Luckin is also the current chairman of NIBA's YP committee in WA and a board member of

AILA in WA. One of his peers says Luckin continues to be "highly energised and enthusiastic" and that his colleagues look forward to supporting him and his ongoing development in the insurance industry.



## STACEY LLOYD

Queensland state mining practice leader

MARSH

Age: 31

Stacey Lloyd manages a team servicing the needs of various clients, from exploration companies to global mining houses, government bodies, utility providers and mining services firms. Her experience in catering for the needs of resources businesses is said to have been invaluable to Marsh, being a significant factor in its successful appointment as sole insurance broker to one of the world's largest resource companies, following a tender process last year. Lloyd has gained management experience by participating in Marsh's internal programs and, according to a senior colleague, her focus on personal and professional development has been central to her achieving a rapid rise within the business. Lloyd is also committed to mentoring colleagues, in order to assist them in achieving their own career potential and in availing themselves of some of the types of opportunities she's been afforded over time. This year, she's been named a Queensland state finalist for NIBA's Young Broker of the Year Award.



## MATT NEKLAPIL

Account director

GRATEX INTERNATIONAL AUSTRALIA

Age: 31

Matt Neklapil is key account director, responsible for the relationship and satisfaction of Gratex International's largest clients, as well as being a project leader, managing the business's most complex projects. He's played an instrumental role in building Gratex's award-winning UPM platform, an underwriting process management software suite designed for underwriting agencies in Australia and New Zealand. He's also contributed significantly to improving the speed and quality of the business's project delivery. "I believe Matt truly is a Young Gun that stands out in the services space," one of Gratex's clients, who's worked with

Neklapil for more than five years, tells *Insurance Business*. In fact, it's no surprise to the business when clients request him specifically to work on a new project. Neklapil also mentors junior members of the team in their project roles. His goal is to contribute to the growth of business and efficiency of brokers, underwriting agencies and insurance companies by managing strategic technology projects and leading the Gratex organisation.

## YOUNG GUNS 2017

**KERRI-ANNE VARKOLY**

National manager – operations

JLT

Age: 32

Kerri-Anne Varkoly is an advocate for women both in insurance and the wider business community. In recent times, she was instrumental in launching the inaugural 'Women at JLT' event, to prompt discussion around young women working. Owing to its success, the business is now looking to hold similar events across the entire JLT business globally. Having started her insurance career at Liverpool Insurance Brokers in 2002, Varkoly joined JLT in 2005 as an account broker and now directs, manages and coordinates the operational activities for JLT A, tasked with improving productivity, efficiency and service levels. She manages more than 20 employees and has achieved a number of business-critical initiatives of benefit to the JLT group. "She has been able to streamline our own operations, making our client services more efficient and effective," a senior colleague told *Insurance Business*. "Her work has made enormous change to JLT and has delivered outstanding results."

**DANIEL WEBBER**

Director

WEBBER INSURANCE SERVICES

Age: 29

Daniel Webber is the director of Webber Insurance Services and its sales manager, leading a team of four. He's responsible for all new business enquiries as well as managing his own client portfolio. Webber became a director of the business at the age of 25, and has been named an *Insurance Business* Elite Broker for the past three years. He spends a great deal of his time working with his team in a mentoring role and enjoys seeing them achieve both business and personal goals. "I have known and worked with Daniel for a number of years and have, at all times, found him to be honest, forthright and prepared to go above and beyond to look after his clients' insurance needs," one industry colleague of Webber's told *Insurance Business*, who went on to praise his expertise and professionalism. Looking ahead, Webber will continue to strive to see Webber Insurance Services become a leading national insurance brokerage.

**ANDREW SPILSBURY**

Marketing manager

GALLAGHER BASSETT

Age: 31

Drew Spilsbury is Gallagher Bassett's head of marketing for Australia and New Zealand. Leading a team of six, he has executive accountability for the company's marketing and internal communications functions. He's had responsibility for implementing a social media strategy, which has positioned GB as the most-followed claims provider in Australia. In the last six months, the business has generated several million dollars in revenue through sales opportunities sourced through LinkedIn. Spilsbury's writings have been published in leading broker publications, including *Insurance Business*, and he's the chief editor of GB's newsletter, *GB Advantage*, which has 16,000 readers per month. This year, he was appointed to GB's senior executive team, making him the youngest executive in the company's history. A very senior colleague speaks of Spilsbury in the highest of terms: "He has the confidence and respect of the global executive team and is quickly moving his influence from Australia and New Zealand to the US and the UK. He has had a profound effect on the entire global marketing team as a mentor and collaborative partner. Statistics show that when our Australian sales teams engage Drew and his marketing team for support and insight, our win rate increases by over 50%."

**SARA PICCHIO**

Transactional risk executive

MARSH

Age: 33

Sara Picchio is regarded as one of the most enterprising, engaged, dynamic and hard-working employees in Marsh's private equity and M&A team, consistently delivering excellent results for clients

since commencing with the organisation. She's responsible for advising Marsh clients involved in mergers and acquisitions in Australia and New Zealand, focusing on structuring and negotiating transactional risk insurance programs, including warranties and indemnities (W&I) insurance, for private equity funds and strategic investors on both domestic and cross-border transactions. Since entering the W&I insurance market last year, Picchio has contributed to the structuring and execution of some of the key transactions in the Australian M&A space involving private equity funds, strategic buyers (both listed and unlisted), and sellers. She's also built the first aggregate database of W&I statistics for the Australian market, with the intention of sharing the current trends in the market and influencing its future developments. Picchio is also participating in W&I education sessions and insurance events in efforts to enhance the W&I insurance knowledge in the M&A market.





## ALEX HAYNES

Underwriter

SLE WORLDWIDE

Age: **24**

Alex Haynes is responsible for underwriting SLE's hospitality portfolio, said to be one of the largest portfolios of rural and regional pubs in Australia. Haynes works with brokers to tailor sustainable risk management and transfer solutions for their clients and has recently been branching out into underwriting of the Pacific Underwriting industrial and commercial property accounts. It's taken Haynes only three years to progress from an intern to a driving force of the property underwriting team. He's described as being "at the forefront of a new generation of underwriters who understand and utilise the value of risk and claims data to drive decision-making in underwriting a property portfolio". It's his aim to progress through the industry to a managerial role, either in the agency space or a large international insurer. Demonstrating a strong dedication to his work and a willingness to assume additional responsibilities, one senior colleague describes Haynes as "well placed to become one of the next generation of leaders in the insurance industry in Australia".

## YOUNG GUNS 2017



## JAMES SMORTHWAITE

Account executive – financial lines group

JLT

Age: 26

James Smorthwaite is only two and a half years into his insurance career and already proving he's one to watch. Day to day, he provides broking support to the senior financial lines brokers, specialising in insurance programs for large commercial and financial institutions. He places complex risks in the D&O liability, professional indemnity, crime and cyber liability space. Outside of JLT, Smorthwaite is racking up impressive achievements, including his NSW top three finish last year in the Ron Shorter Memorial Award for Professionalism in Public Speaking. He's also a passionate advocate for the education and development of young professionals in insurance, and is Australasian President of Young Insurance Professionals (YIPs). Smorthwaite is committed to helping newcomers to the industry with their career aspirations and understanding of insurance via the numerous educational seminars and networking events that YIPs organises. Down the track, his aim is to specialise and excel in the field of financial lines risks. He also hopes to achieve a reputation of trust and reliability in the market and to be seen as a strong advocate for his clients.



## JAMES PENNETTA

Senior business development manager

VERO

Age: 27

James Pennetta began his insurance career 10 years ago in the ACT in a junior claims role, before moving into underwriting and then distribution. Now he works with broker intermediaries on a range of product lines, including property, liability, motor, construction and engineering, as well as claims. Working alongside a state manager, Pennetta is responsible for leading a team and assisting in difficult situations. A senior colleague says he's quickly established himself dealing with complex, large-scale broker clients and describes him as "persistent" and "always looking for outside-the-box solutions". Pennetta is also described as a "credible, respected and admired asset to Vero and brokers alike". In the future, he hopes to further develop his leadership expertise. He will continue working with senior management to drive group results and deliver growth opportunities via Suncorp's Connected Customers strategy.



## BROOKE TROW

Underwriting manager

QUS – STRATA INSURANCE

Age: 34

Brooke Trow's focus is on providing first class service to QUS's broker portfolio. She was one of the first staff members to join the QUS team, commencing in 2010 as an underwriter. Last year, she became a senior member of the management team and has played a key role in establishing several QUS programs and initiatives, including its work-from-home program, training and development activities, and the

abolition of annual reviews and the retraining of managers to enable regular constructive and empowering conversations with their team members about performance. Trow is described as "a fantastic contributor to the success of QUS" and someone who has been able to successfully juggle the demands of a young family while continuing to grow on a professional level. Highly regarded at all levels within the organisation, over 50% of applications for QUS's job shadowing and mentoring program are requests to be mentored by Trow.



## CHRIS QUICK

Motor underwriting manager

DAWES UNDERWRITING

Age: 35

Chris Quick joined Dawes Underwriting Australia six years ago as a motor underwriter. As his experience and natural leadership qualities soon became evident, he quickly progressed to the role of team leader. Immediately, he had a positive impact on the team, changing a number of business processes and quickly building strong relationships with key brokers. He was then promoted to motor underwriting manager, with an increased focus on business development and managing

a team of eight staff. Quick has led the agency through two changes of insurers as well as the change of ownership from Calliden to Steadfast, and has grown the portfolio over the last two years by 15%. He attends a number of industry functions to be the face of the agency at a national level and is well respected not only within the Steadfast Group, but also externally with insurers, third party administrators and the intermediated broker channel. Quick's efforts have helped put the agency in a leadership position in its segment.



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## YOUNG GUNS 2017



## JENNIFER PHAM

Financial lines underwriter

SWISS RE CORPORATE SOLUTIONS

Age: 28

"Every now and again you meet a young spark in the industry, and that's exactly what Jen is." This high praise is from a Swiss Re staff member speaking about Jennifer Pham, a financial lines underwriter with Swiss Re Corporate Solutions. Pham's responsibilities include medical malpractice, D&O, professional indemnity, cyber and IT, and she provides valuable insights and advice to the senior leadership team across the business. Pham has been praised for developing and delivering growth across the fin pro book by vigilantly analysing and underwriting large ASX-listed corporations. She was part of a duo who won the Swiss Re Corporate Solutions 2016 deal of the year, worth millions to the business. It's said that she's also been instrumental in developing new wordings, which has allowed for the expansion of the portfolio. She hopes to become a senior underwriter in the near future.



## JASON SHEEHAN

Senior underwriter – property

BERKSHIRE HATHAWAY SPECIALTY INSURANCE

Age: 33

According to one industry peer, Jason Sheehan is a young professional constantly striving to achieve and then surpass set goals, and working to consistently exceed expectations. Sheehan spent five years at Vero (his first underwriting role) and became a senior underwriter within 18 months. He later took on a six-month secondment to Perth to lead Vero's WA property team to bring about positive change in the culture of the team and the scope of the underwriting appetite, which he achieved quickly. He was approached by BHSI to join its Australian team, and today is tasked with building its mid-market property proposition within Vic, Tas and WA alongside the national mid-market manager. A past committee member of both the ANZIIF YPs and YIPs, Sheehan's ambition is to be seen as a strong leader and to say that he's been able to give back to the insurance industry in a meaningful way.



## BEN ROBINSON

Team leader – specialised business lines

ARTHUR J. GALLAGHER

Age: 27

After spending just over 14 months with Arthur J. Gallagher, Ben Robinson is now team leader of its specialised business unit – commercial, overseeing a team of nine brokers and a book of over \$10m GWP in commercial, national and global accounts. As well as making his mark in AJG, Robinson is a member of NIBA's YP Vic committee, assisting in conducting learning and development sessions for young brokers, taking new approaches to innovative learning styles and better educating brokers as to the ever-evolving insurance markets. This year, he was named a Vic/Tas state finalist for NIBA's Young Broker of the Year Award. Robinson is described by one industry colleague as someone demonstrating strong work ethic, knowledge and an overall positive demeanour in his approach to his work and clients. The same colleague reports he's gained respect and confidence in such dealings in a relatively short period of time and has been proactive in sourcing training and development opportunities for both himself and his team.



## WILLIAM ROBINSON

Partner

WOTTON + KEARNEY

Age: 31

William Robinson's involvement in the insurance industry began about 10 years ago as a paralegal. In 2015, he joined Wotton + Kearney (W+K) as a senior associate and has made a significant impact on the firm and its clients. Recently, he was promoted to partner, making him one of the youngest in W+K's history. Robinson is experienced in a wide range of insurance litigation, with a particular focus on public and products liability and property damage claims. Appointed to Perth to build and run the general liability team, Robinson is said to have quickly learned the nuances of the WA market and has, in a short period, translated that into a growing practice. He's widely regarded in the firm and the market for his passion and commitment to mentoring and developing junior insurance lawyers, which he views as an integral part of his role. Robinson is an active participant in numerous insurance industry groups and has become renowned for his research on sports-related concussions. He has given numerous presentations on the topic, engaging with several national sporting bodies and insurers. He also provides written updates and articles on recent developments in insurance litigation. In times ahead, Robinson hopes to continue building W+K's WA presence to establish the firm as the preeminent choice for insurers.

# WINNING OVER THE YOUNG GUNS

Hays Recruitment's **Carl Piesse** shares insights into how insurance employers can scoop up their own share of hot new talent

**THE DEPTH** of high-calibre young professionals profiled here attests to the excellent quality of candidates flowing into the Australian workforce and the impact that talent has the potential to make on a sector.

So, how does the industry improve in its efforts to attract newcomers into the industry?

Carl Piesse, business director of Hays Insurance, stresses the need for employers to be cognisant of jobseekers' long-term career ambitions.

"Candidates are looking at job vacancies in more detail to find out what that progression is, and they're asking for more information," he

Piesse says employers also need to give greater consideration to brand.

"We're seeing jobseekers do a lot more homework into an organisation; they want to see what others are saying about a company before potentially applying or before going for an interview," he says.

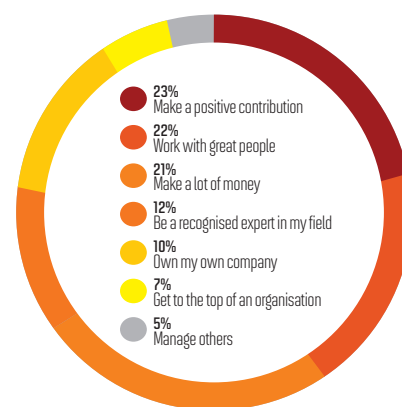
Piesse mentions candidates' use of the website [glassdoor.com.au](http://glassdoor.com.au).

"Essentially they can see what people's opinions and feedback on organisations are," he explains.

That therefore makes it essential for businesses to have a clear and consistent

## WHAT MATTERS MOST

Last November, ManpowerGroup released the results of research involving more than 19,000 millennials across 25 countries, scrutinising their work ethic and priorities. These are the responses Australian millennials provided when asked to cite their top career goal



Source: ManpowerGroup®, Millennials: A Career for Me, November 2016



**"People are looking for exciting and interesting careers, and insurance generally offers that. It's how you package it up and sell it"**

**Carl Piesse, Hays Recruitment**

says. "They want to know if the role is a step up or if it's a step in the right direction and make sure there is a clear career path on offer.

"If insurance companies can promote an exciting career, where people will get training and development, mentoring and structured career paths, they'll have a much better chance at attracting more people," he says.

According to Piesse, it's important to be able to communicate the candidate's potential career trajectory at the time of interview, as well as providing an insight into a business's strategic direction.

"The interview process is [a candidate's] first touchpoint with the organisation, so it's essential they have a great experience," he says.

employee value proposition (EVP).

"Their EVP needs to be lived across the whole organisation so that employees, customers [and] everyone have the same impression of what an organisation stands for," he says.

He says an online presence for a business is very important.

"Candidates will research your organisation online. As a company, you need to be present on social media, [and] you need to have a strong careers page on your website. A great way to use social media is to profile stories of success in your organisation. We see a lot of top employers using social media as an attraction tool."

So, are there industries Piesse would single out because of their proactivity in working to

attract top talent? When asked, he mentions the banking sector.

"They're well known for career advancement [and] they've got excellent graduate recruitment programs," he says.

"Accountancy firms are ... [also] really good at attracting young talent because they have a reputation for providing training and development and giving [candidates] a solid grounding in accounting."

But Piesse is optimistic about the future of insurance.

"I think insurance has got a really bright future. People are looking for exciting and interesting careers, and insurance generally offers that," he says. "It's how you package it up and sell it." **IE**