

# ★ EURA The EuRApean

## Chief Executives' Report May 2010 Tad Zurlinden



As you're all aware it was with great sadness and regret that we had to cancel the EuRA International Relocation Congress, which was due to take place in Palma de Mallorca last week. Having been with EuRA since its very beginning, I can honestly say that no other course of events has been so difficult to manage and so complex to balance. But the overwhelming support from members on learning of the cancellation just proves to me what an exceptional group of professionals go to make EuRA something so unique.

Our venues (Gran Melia Victoria, Melia Palas Atenea, Gala Dinner [Font Seca] and Party Night [Galdent]) have been outstanding in agreeing to defer the event to next year at no penalty to EuRA and the dates will now be Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup>, Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> and Friday 15<sup>th</sup> of April. I think for me, it really became obvious just how much the Gran Melia in particular, had done for us, when at breakfast last Thursday, when there should have been 460 EuRA guests in the hotel, I was the only person in the dining room. There were just 16 guests in the entire place.

Our sponsors, exhibitors, speakers and AV crew have also agreed to defer until next year at no cost to EuRA and we thank them all for their exceptional kindness and support in these extraordinary circumstances.

We cancelled the event as a result of the Icelandic volcano Eyjafjallajökull and because we knew that by doing this we would be acting in the best interests of delegates. By cancelling we responded to the concerns of members and delegates who were hesitant to travel in such an uncertain time. We also knew, that by cancelling the event, we would face significant financial consequences. Had we gone ahead with the event, any delegate who could not get to Palma, would have lost their entire delegate fee.

A side effect of the cancellation is that it has given us the opportunity to offer delegates a credit against future conferences. All delegates have been written to and will receive a credit note and a re-booking form for next year within the coming week. These are credits against future conferences and are fully transferable from person to person.

To thank 2010 delegates for their support, we will hold another party, on Wednesday evening, the 13<sup>th</sup> of April at no further cost. The **"Return to Palma Party"** will take place, weather permitting, on the glorious harbour terrace of the Gran Melia Victoria and will be a networking welcome event, in addition to our other programmes. This extends our programme across three days and we will also be working with partner organisations to help them to arrange their networking events. If you need any help or advice with this, I would be delighted to give you the details of our event management company on site in Palma, who have been truly outstanding in both organising and cancelling this year's event.

It is still difficult to assess quite how the financial impact of Eyjafjallajökull will affect our operations over the coming 18-24 months, but I am very grateful to the council and my staff, who have been so supportive and have all worked so hard to make the very best of a horrible situation.

If you have any questions or concerns please call myself or my team at any time.

Thanks again to all of you who have been so supportive.