

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

“My wife just shook her head and walked out the front door, leaving me to think about everything I just lost...” In August 2015, Rick Thomas was one of the millions of married people who had secretly signed up to the extramarital affairs website Ashley Maddison but was exposed to the world over as a cheat when the site was hacked. Just like street crime, which historically grew concerning population growth, the world is witnessing a similar evolution of cyber-crime. You shall have to read elsewhere for tips on secret rendezvous; however, this investigation does provide a pathway for the insurance brokering industry to assist in mitigating further cyber-crime, which may indirectly assist our helpless Mr Rick Thomas.

The project draws attention to the fact that the highest professional status an Insurance Broker can obtain falls short of peer industry requirements, in particular, a comparison of respective 'Chartered' status. **This project provides a new pathway for insurance brokers to attain a new and higher level of recognised professional standard (tier 4)**, and in doing so, provide welcome new leadership and advocacy within the industry. The report also follows **how I go about achieving my own pathway to tier 4 standard while articulating my learning achieved during this journey and how my own professional practice has changed accordingly.**

The project's pathway to tier 4 professional standard begins from the (current) top of three professional statuses, and is constructed on three primary goals:

The first goal is to advance to a higher level of insurance broker professional standard. A holistic master goal whose milestones and learning are subsequently explored and articulated in greater depth in goals' two and three. Notwithstanding, during the process of defining a new professional standard and conducting an investigation, goal one provided myself valuable learning in the areas of sources of power, leadership, project management, using influence and tellingly highlights the benefits of being associated with a post-grad study. Unless referenced, all work produced in this project utilises my own original data.

The second goal is to work with the Insurance Brokers Association of New Zealand to define a new and higher level of insurance broker professional standard, Tier 4 level. The central goal of this investigation, goal two contains nine pillars of attainable personal achievement, providing a clear pathway for brokers to reach a higher and meaningful professional status.

The project's section additionally articulates my methodology and journey in reaching my own tier 4 status, including the learning achieved.

One of the nine pillars is a substantial work-based project investigation with results being of benefit to the broader industry, and this project is contained in this section. Cybercrime's financial disruption to the New Zealand economy is half a billion dollars, yet only 5% of New Zealand businesses have willingly protected their business with insurance. Why is this? This puzzle formed the nucleus for my goal two work-based project. The vehicle used in achieving this was **surveying New Zealand businesses, researching sales of cyber insurance and understanding buying behaviour**. The first time a survey has been performed on this subject, and the project articulates this process, including collaborating with an industry competitor to gain access to a broader survey sample and thus obtain more accurate results. The results of the survey reveal the buying habits and cyber-attack history of the New Zealand business landscape and further investigates these concerning business size, industry types, age of decision-makers and geographical locations.

The survey revealed 23 new and unique findings, including that very few brokers engage their clients on cyber insurance protection, with a quarter of respondents not aware that insurance was available! Tellingly, younger 'tech-savvy' business decision-makers are twice as likely to embrace cyber insurance protection. All business managers would be advised to resource staff training to combat the most likely cyber-attack threat of Phishing, as staff training would have little impact on defending a Ransomware attack. From a broker's perspective, the Manufacturing industry provides the most significant opportunity to up-sell cyber insurance as findings reveal this industry is most at risk for cyber-attacks, is woefully underinsured for cyber threats and most decision-makers within this industry would act on their broker's advice. Conversely, the I.T. industry presents the most challenging opportunity for a broker as this industry is the least likely to suffer a cyber-attack and half of the industry's decision-makers would never or seldom act on their broker's advice.

Goal 2 also includes a **comparison of the nine different insurance policies** available to New Zealand brokers. A universal coverage template was created, and each policy is critiqued against this, identifying how each policy responds to 53 different threats or situation. A matrix concludes the comparison and ranks each policy against the master template and,

fittingly, each other. This process was performed by meticulously researching all nine individual insurance policy wordings, current to November 2018.

The combination of investigating the business cyber insurance landscape by survey and researching all available cyber insurance policy wordings, availed myself with an elevated cyber insurance knowledge (expert), fittingly another pillar in achieving tier 4 status.

The third and final goal is to explore the elements of Tier 4 through work practice in the development of an emerging market – cyber insurance. To achieve goal two's substantial project investigation, I first had to learn the process of conducting a survey. Goal 3 investigates and articulates the methodology and learning achieved of performing a survey from the start to completion. The process includes defining the research questions, specifying the population of interest, identify sample frames, choosing a data collection mode, designing and pre-test questionnaires, selecting a representative sample, recruit and measure the sample respondents, coding and edit the unadjusted data, conducting post hoc data adjustments, performing data analysis and interpreting results.

The project investigation concludes with examples in which I critically self-reflect on significant real-life experiences, which, after the reflective process, have led to a changed conceptual perspective. My final chapter, appropriately titled 'where to from here?' is a pseudo project conclusion that explores future pathways and options where I can best utilise my new learning.

I vividly recall not more than 30 months ago, enquiring of the questionable value that studying for a Master of Professional Practice qualification would provide myself. Mercifully, as I now reach the completion of this same qualification, all thoughts of irrelevancy have well and truly been expunged. It is fascinating to plot the breadth of personal transformation and how this learning has subsequently changed my professional practice. A summary of benefits achieved include, but are not limited to:

- When presented with a challenging situation or opportunity, new reflective qualities now result in me deeply thinking from different perspectives and plotting different outcomes. I am now less likely to jump to conclusions or make impulsive decisions, and with this comes a higher likelihood of achieving the preferable outcome.

- After performing extensive research during this project, I am now conscience of openly questioning the source and validity of (new) information whenever presented. Conversely, a far higher degree of appreciation, is also levelled.
- Increased self-confidence is a pleasant by-product, and tellingly mirrors the same conclusion determined in this project investigation.
- I now possess new cultural knowledge and understanding, which this project will demonstrate has a direct positive effect on my business. The same positive outcome is also levelled with an elevated understanding of ethical workplace practices and responsibilities, also conveying business benefits.
- I now possess a new desire to advocate for principles and industries that I am passionate about, influencing change and bringing benefits to my business and potentially the broader insurance brokering industry
- New functional leadership skills, coupled with reflective learning allows me to get the best out of my team
- New personal ambition and personal branding, coupled with a new desire to self-improve, has allowed me to 'raise my bar' on setting personal goals and potentially effecting change
- The quality of my written communication is vastly improved, in terms of formal structure and message clarity
- I am appreciably far more inquisitive and have found myself taking an interest in different fields and topical issues
- New (expert) knowledge of cyber insurance policies and landscape allows me to offer new advice in this area, benefiting my customers who are more well informed
- New (expert) knowledge of conducting a survey
- New (elevated) project management skills gained in leading my project and bringing it all together, substantiates the benefits and realisation of adhering to and utilising, a sound plan and time management

Conveniently, all new learning and personal qualities can be transformed into my current or potential future workplace and home life.