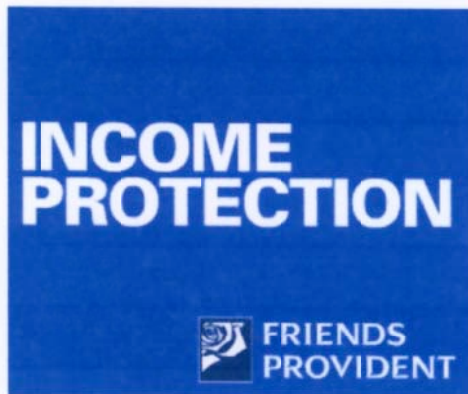


Respect the consumer's choice of distributor

- 09-Oct-2008

In recent letters to the trade press regarding the proposals contained within the retail distribution review, I have been challenging our industry on a number of points but on two particular key issues.



First, the relatively modest response to the review from the IFA community could in a very short period of time lead to an unsatisfactory outcome for those IFAs which really value their independence in a business sense. This would be a disaster.

Second, I have contended that as the basic foundation of good financial planning is the same for every suitably qualified and experienced financial adviser, why should the distribution channel they choose to represent make any difference whatsoever to whether they are capable of giving appropriate advice?

I am delighted to see that Aifa has sprung into action with the release of the first in a series of issue papers in which it supports the idea that "people offering sales with persuasion should be qualified to the same level as IFAs".

I look forward to a time when the people offering financial advice are qualified to an acceptable level to do so and when the client is free to choose the adviser they are most comfortable with from a variety of options.

No one distribution channel has the right to dictate to a client how they should source their financial advice. That decision should rest with the client and be influenced by factors like professionalism, knowledge, experience and good service.

I look forward to what Aifa has to say on behalf of IFAs in the remainder of its issue papers.

David J Cox

Managing director, Suuqea