

AHA – Hydrographic Advisory Committee Meeting

Government Skills Australia (GSA) – Adelaide

Tuesday 20th January 2008

Attendees:

Bill Barrat (AHA Committee Member), Alex Springall (OTEN), Michael Briggs (HAC Victoria), Greg May (HAC - WA), Graham Parsons (HAC - NSW), Ian White (QLD), Michael Whiting (AHA Secretary), Mic Clayton (AHA Publicity Officer/HAC - NSW), Bill Steen (AHA Chairman), Paul Langshaw (AHA Committee Member/National Training Coordinator). Frank Davies (WA), Allan Russ (HAC - NT), Kevin Dennis (HAC - SA). Prue Madson (GSA).

AHA Restructuring Presentation - Bill Steen (Chairman).

Overview of Presentation

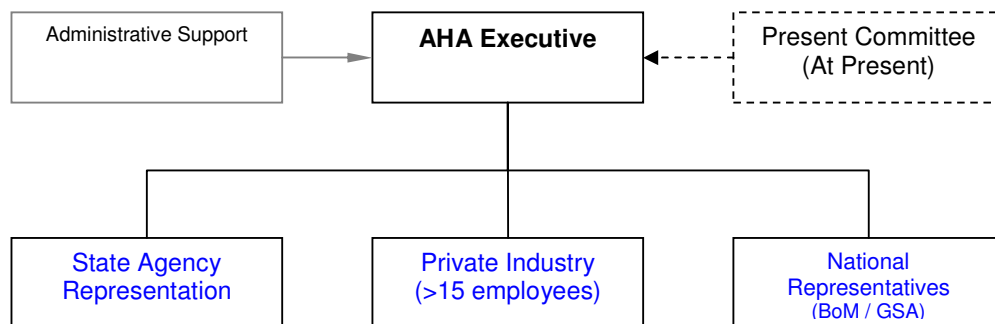
The Australian Hydrographers Association (AHA) needs to be proactive within the industry.

We have reached a point with Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) funding – that something needs to be done.

In order to take a step forward the AHA needs direct input from Agencies / Key Stakeholders.

Currently the Association second guesses Stakeholders. There is a need to improve communication to represent the industry and be seen as the Peak body.

Possible structure of the Association (two levels):



Activities

- Education (Currently Hydrographic Advisory Committee)

- Maintain National Certification
- Speciality Working Groups
- Quantity Assurance
- Instrumentation

Only **Commitment** and **Support** will make the Peak Industry Body work!

- The Association needs Support of the Industry.
- Membership has to be in acceptance of the model.
- Transitional move towards a better Association.
- New Zealand Hydrologic Society administration is paid (400 hours per year).

Comments:

Graham Parsons (GP)– "...Model is upside down? How is board elected?..".

Kevin Dennis (KD)– "...The Australian Drillers Association Board is elected from membership....".

KD– "...Industry Advisory Board is the Executive...".

Bill Steen (BS)- "...Why join? The AHA not seen as pro-active, in order to be the Peak Industry Body... we need to sort out the nuts and bolts to move forward...".

Mic Clayton (MC)– "...Constitutionally we can employ employee people – possible administrative support. "Not for Profit" funding models need to be looked at...".

BS– "...Some bodies operate a "Fee for service" and Corporate Membership provide returns to companies...".

Allan Russ (AR)-

"...Agree with Peak Body concept...".

"...Use online Meetings Working groups online saving \$'s...".

"...Agree on the need for Certification, however NRETA have already done some work in this area...".

"...Simon Cruickshank 100% behind Association...".

GP– "...four people on the board?...".

KD– "...Nominated/elected by the general membership...".

"...Industry board to include:

- 1x State representative (All States).

- 1 x Company representative (All Hydrographic Companies).
- 1 x BoM representative (All Interested Parties)..."

MC – "...Currently the AHA Executive consists of a Committee of six including three Office Bearers, and State Representatives..".

KD – "...AHA Industry Group – members should have control of the board not the States. This is a possible driving force for membership...".

"...Certification is the driver for membership – nothing to force States to comply...".

"...The ADA was unable to reach agreement across the States for drilling licences...".

"...it won't happen without Federal support or drivers...".

"...Education alone won't bring people in...".

Ian White (IW)- "...Data collectors have to be certified...".

"...Need to get buy in...".

BS- "...Buy in is achieved through State Representatives rather than one representative...".

"...Need to have general consensus...".

"...Sell back to Agencies...".

KD- "...Certification model, rather than a Corporate model would pay for support...".

Paul Langshaw (PL)-

"...Corporate or Individual membership payments?...".

"...there is a need to have commitment from both employees and employers...".

"...Certification required at a number of different levels...".

MC- "...How many staff agencies contract data collection Companies? (only a few) any mechanisms in place to use 'Certified' practitioners?...".

GP- "...Local Government looking at monitoring contracts...".

"...Department of Water and Energy (DWE) have contracts with Local Government – possible inclusion for Certified Practitioners could be built into contracts...".

KD – "...Same problems with catchment groups currently employ or contract whole range of people to collect data ie ecologists...".

Michael Briggs (MB)- "...Contractors won't want it, for what price?...".

“...Clear driver from BOM, although 50% - 60% of data is for BOM...”.

“...need to get value for Certification...”.

GP- “...Certification has to deliver a better product. Mining Companies won’t jump on band wagon...”.

PL- “...Certification culture develops over time...”.

Frank Davies (FD)- “...\$ drivers are only part of the picture, what above State Agencies that provide data for free...”.

Alex Springall (AS)- “...Some data customers may resort to low cost methods, if data collection is a ‘have to do’...”.

“...Overall legislation needs to be changed...”.

KD- “...ADIA have licences which are linked to Legislation, which is different to Certification...”.

IW- “...Certification is easily sold to management...”.

BS- “...Certification is only part of the jigsaw –there needs to be more communication across the industry...”.

ALL- “...Totally agree...”

Greg May (GM)- “...Working groups are inexpensive, and producing good results...”.

“...AHA has a possible Working Group coordination role...”.

BS- “...It’s accepted that Working Groups cover the entire spectrum of the industry from Operations to Management...”.

IW- “...Expert Metering Group setup by BoM...”.

MC- “...End driver for this working group is revenue...”.

BS-

“...Peak body would evolve from Certification – Hopefully would drive up membership...”.

“...Need to expand current AHA structure with more input from the States...”.

“...What would State pay?...”.

MB- "...Large structure may become unwieldy due to size...".

KD- "...Speciality working groups will evolve...".
"...need to have all Hydrographers as members...".

MC- "...Fund Administrative person to coordinate "working group" connecting people across Australia – for technical interchange including small workshops...".

IW- "...It's an evolving process. Certification is primary driver...".
"...Swapping of people across States is good, however there are issues with pay rates...".

KD- "Need Country wide Certification of Hydrographers...".

AS- "...Certification will drive support for Qualification by all States...".

MC- "...AHA needs to develop Certification process, and then manage accordingly..." "...enables the Association to say 'that we are the Peak Hydrographic Body'...".

IW- "...If Certification was available, it could be embedded in processes – i.e. position descriptions and contracts...".

KD- "...Possible Credits for ongoing professional development...".

PL- "...we need to sell ourselves. Need to develop a Strategy/program for selling ourselves, higher profiling...".

ML- "...Promotional base is available using the email and financial members lists, managed through 'mailman portal'..." email group 'education@aha.net.au' will be used to distribute educational information..."

IW- "...Promotional type work, i.e. charging for Doppler training...".
"...need to keep membership informed when conducting training...".

GM- "...Look at coordination of existing hydrographic procedures (Quality Assurance), providing value to jurisdictions...".

MC- "...What are the priority working groups? What's the need?..."

ALL- consensus "...ADCP...".

MC- "...What about discharge measurement?..."

"...Need to progress towards someone employed to provide Administrative Support for coordinating the priority working groups..."

KD- "...Development of Australian Standards is the long term priority..."

AS- "...Need to be considered carefully as the Standards are owned by 'Standards Australia'..."

BS- "...Natural evolution – certification is the hinge point..."

"...establish key speciality working groups..."

"...Quality Assurance standards. Should BoM take control of this group..."

GM- "...Perhaps the AHA should offer support for establishing Working Groups as BoM are struggling to establish groups..."

"...Competency is the key..."

"...Competency and Experience is strong across the industry..."

"...there is value in driving Certification through BoM..."

MB- "...Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE Vic) are writing requirements for Certified Hydrographers into existing contracts, a starter for the States..."

BS- "...How do we get buy in from State Agencies?..."

GP- "...I'm a little confused by the new structure – does the Board set direction?..."

BS- "...Who runs the Board?..."

IW- "...as an interim measure, I'm happy to be on the Board..."

BS- "...so much is happening in the industry we can't sit on our hands..."

IW- "...use BoM funding to establish Standards..."

KD- "...how can we improve the AHA standing with BoM..."

GP- "...BoM funding will be available for the next three years, a clear driver to establish Peak Body..."

MC- "...Next three years is the transitional zone period for the Association..."

KD- "...Funding maybe available through Council of Australian Governments (CoAG) and other agencies such as the National Water Council (NWC)....".

GP- "...funding opportunities need to be explored beyond the three years...".

BS- "...Definite need for Administrative Support, a Training Officer and a possible lobbyist to progress the Association...".

KD- "...Revenue streams are out there, possibly use a contract writer to assist with Project Briefs. Rather than employee people...".

MC- "...the Association is 'Not For Profit' the Constitution allows for 'knowledge sharing/ education'. It could be pushing a fine line..."
"...when Members gain financial reward, the Association stops being 'Not For Profit'...".

MC- "...There is a need to give direction to the membership. There is a need to review all changes are in accordance with the Constitution...".
"...there is a need for more information to go out to the Membership. Improve communication...".

Memorandum of Understanding

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between NSW TAFE (OTEN) and the Australian Hydrographers Association tabled for discussion.

Agreement includes reciprocal Acknowledgement for support on group websites.

Comments:

GP, KD, GM- "...support Memorandum of Understanding...".

MC- "...MOU is an acknowledgement of a working relationship.

AHA Committee to develop further.

Hydrographic Training Opportunities

Overview provided to the HAC, by Paul Langshaw, of proposals for 'Live In Course' from NSW TAFE (OTEN) and Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT).

There is a need for face to face training through live in courses of four to five days duration. CIT and OTEN both provide face to face training that would map back to the CERT IV / Diploma in Hydrography through Recognised Prior Learning (RPL) from/to Course.

Feedback is required as to which one should AHA support?

Notes of interest:

- CIT initial quotation of \$10,000 was reduced to \$3,250 when course charges were questioned.
- CIT not transportable across Australia, the campus is in Canberra. Accommodation will be at a nearby Caravan Park. Not onsite.
- OTEN will transport Teacher/Instructor to other states.

Comments:

AS- "...OTEN would work with State Authorities to achieve the best outcome...".

“..the Residential Course is to teach people the skills they don’t receive through on-job training routinely...”.

“...There is also a need to improve the skills of older staff providing mentoring....”.

IW- “... need to get consistency of mentoring rather than perpetuating wrong skills...”.

PL- “...Residential course provides delivery of complimentary training to the Certificate/Diploma of Hydrography...”.

MC- “...due to the numbers of potential students, OTEN needs support from AHA...”

PL- “...this course possibly addresses the skills shortage...”.

KD- “...need to look at web conferencing and interesting ways to deliver a structured course...”.

AS- “...Residential Course will provide intensive hands on/face to face training ensuring consistent standards...”.

GM- “...possible two parts complete assignments and learning using teleconferencing followed by the hands on residential course with Assessment...”.

PL- “...Is this what the industry wants?...”.

MC- “...all seem to agree that AHA develops this opportunity further...”.

PL- “...Important to realise that low number of enrolments will not sustain more than one Registered Training Organisation (RTO)...”.

[Further presentation of AHA and OTEN Memorandum of Understanding.](#)

MC- “...AHA could coordinate training timetable. The Memorandum of Understanding is a profile raising exercise for the AHA and OTEN...”.
“...offering to be a conduit to direct people into one training area...”.

IW- “...We need to quantify competencies then determine Residential Course structure. Ten days was a good estimate...”.

KD- "...Memorandum of Understanding comes first. Best thing to do would be to support OTEN and put links to OTEN on AHA website...".

MC- "...How does OTEN course deal with specialism's including professional development i.e. Alpine, estuarine and groundwater hydrography...".

AS- "...OTEN would hire industry support for specialists to prepare courses...".

KD- "...No reason that some components of course to be covered by other National Accredited courses...".

AS- "...In order to gain a credit for subjects through Recognised Prior Learning (RPL) reasonable academic references/experience is required rather than just a letter from your employer...".

"...OTEN RPL process can be audited...".

"...Example of RPL only subject is Hydrographic Computing - No course notes or assessment...".

"...to get an RPL you have to enrol...".

National Hydrographic Certification:

Presentation by Paul Langshaw regarding National Certification of Hydrographers, including a National Hydrographers Register.

Examples of Certification undertaken by other Industry Bodies include Groundwater Association and Irrigation Australia.

Comments:

MB- "...what is a practising Hydrographer? Or a Qualified Hydrographer?...".

PL- "...Certification is voluntary...".

MB- "...Do other industries have levels of certification?...".

PL- "...yes – Levels of Certification...".

"...possibly Level 3 – Minimum requirement for national database...".

AS- "...need to remember the unqualified but experienced...".

PL- "...need to embrace all rather than be exclusive..."

KD- "...what about tagging of data with the Certification Level of collector..."

GP- "...Starting point is Level 3 no need to have lower levels..."

AS- "...Level 5 different to level 1/2 - 2 years to gain assumed competencies..."

GM- "...Skills set is minimum requirement, Level 5 shouldn't exist..."

KD- "...Level 1 becomes skill set, Extra levels for completing Diploma, currently no incentive to do Advanced Diploma..."

GM- "...Convert Certificate IV Hydrograph to a Diploma as they are the same..."

"...alternative Certification Level:

1. Skill set/ relevant experience
2. Certificate IV Hydrography (Minimum 2 years experience).
3. Diploma/Advanced Diploma (2 years experience).
4. Certificate IV Hydrography (>5 years experience).
5. Advanced Diploma (> 5 years experience).
6. Experience

GP- "...Achieving Certificate is competency based, therefore don't need years of experience as a requirement..."

AS- "...OTEN currently have two students enrolled whom aren't in working in the industry, how do they complete Qualification with no practical experience?..."

KD- "...what does a level 5 need to do?..."

MC- "...More certification of competency..."

GP- "...What does level 1 mean?..."

GM- "...Don't need Level 1 should it be removed?..."

KD- "...possibility of mapping Certification levels against technical levels across Australia...".

"...another alternative Certification Level:

1. Skills Set.
2. Certificate IV/Diploma.
3. Advanced Diploma.

KD- "...Experience isn't necessarily a consideration...".

Prue Madsen(PM)- " ...Ongoing professional Development (Experience and maintaining competency is the same thing)...".

"....Australian Hydrographers' Association becomes brokers for obtaining points...".

AS- "...if a Hydrographer is Certified, then they should be responsible for maintaining points towards professional development...".

PM- "...if the Certification process aligns with three qualifications levels this is the same as Irrigation Australia, are there any other precedents with Government employment?...".

MC- "...your employer will decide levels through Position Description. Hydrographer is certified if you maintain a level of professional development...".

MB- "...there is a need for other levels...".

PM- "...Question – Qualified/Qualified and certified. There has to be more value adding – is it of value?

KD- "...the difference is Professional Development...".

GM- "...the value of a hydrographer is his/her experience...".

PM- "...Is it possible to start at entry level certification?...".

MB- "...Happy for Certification, unsure that Levels are required...".

AS- "...Certificate IV works if practical skills are included...".

MC- "...Maybe two levels of Certification are required. But don't have Levels that are Qualified or not Qualified.

MC- "...Maybe there is a sunset clause on level 3 Certification...".

MC- "...base starting point is two or three levels there is a need to force RPL to the employers to complete...".

PM- "...there is an issue with Skills Set, there is no encouragement for enrolling in the qualification...".

AS- "...Skills Set could be obtained through RPL is achievable...".

"...Development of improving assessment guides....".

"...Setting guidelines for competency assessment is important component to obtain evidence of competency....".

PM- "...Need to meet criteria for obtaining knowledge...".

"...can't be achieved without technical content...".

MC- "...AHA may need to interview to determine experience...".

GM- "...Interviews fraught with danger. A better method is through the Qualification i.e. Certificate IV enrolment and RPL process...".

PM- "...Danger of Panel can be seen as "Boys Club" ...".

MC- "...The Oceanic Hydrographers use a similar framework...".

AS- "...perhaps there is a need for Probationary Certification – same level until sunset clause expires i.e. within 2 years rather than an actual date...".

"...60% of the industry will fit into this category...".

Lunch 12:30 – 13:30

Recap of earlier discussions

Certification Levels:

1. Skill set.
2. Certificate IV/Diploma.
- 3 Probationary Clause.

- Accreditation maintained by professional development.
- Maintenance through points system

All agreed that this is a suitable starting point.

KD- "... Need to make determination between old CERTIV/Diploma in this process...".

"...international trained Hydrographers would be accredited through the RPL process would still get probationary certification...".

Michael Ede (ME)- "...Currently there is no New Zealand hydrographic course...".

AS- "...Professional development is not doing the same thing over and over...". "...once a person has a Qualification OTEN's involvement is limited...".

GP- "...Continuous development is important over 5 years of experience...". "...Professional Development (PD) i.e. recent 'Sontek' course held in N.S.W...".

MC- "...AHA Workshops also seen as PD opportunity...".

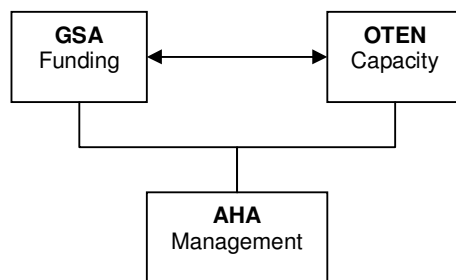
PM- "...remember that the assessment tools achieve national consistencies...".

13:30 Other Business

Prue Madsen discussed possibility of 'eLearning' development through recently released Federal/Commonwealth Government Funding – submission is required by 1st April.

The funding submission would be developed through GSA. eLearning is to be utilised within an organisation for development of staff. However the ongoing development of 'eLearning' is managed by the owner of the product (This could possibly be OTEN).

ALL - "...Agreed to proceed...".



PM- "...traditional course and eLearning are complimentary...".

“...Master maintained by GSA Possibility AHA provides by training on web...”.

“...there is no conflict as it’s actually a positive due to the ongoing course development....”.

AS- “...there Need for more feedback in course notes...”

The AHA should drive changes in course notes this is the role of the Education and Training subcommittee.

- Hydrographic Advisory Committee (HAC) to continue along with availability of funding.
- HAC to be piggy backed onto the next AHA conference (Perth 2010).

Possible options for AHA Conference:

Option 1:

Two Days of Technical Papers.

One Field Day.

Option 2.

One and half days of Technical Papers.

Half day of Technical Panel meetings.

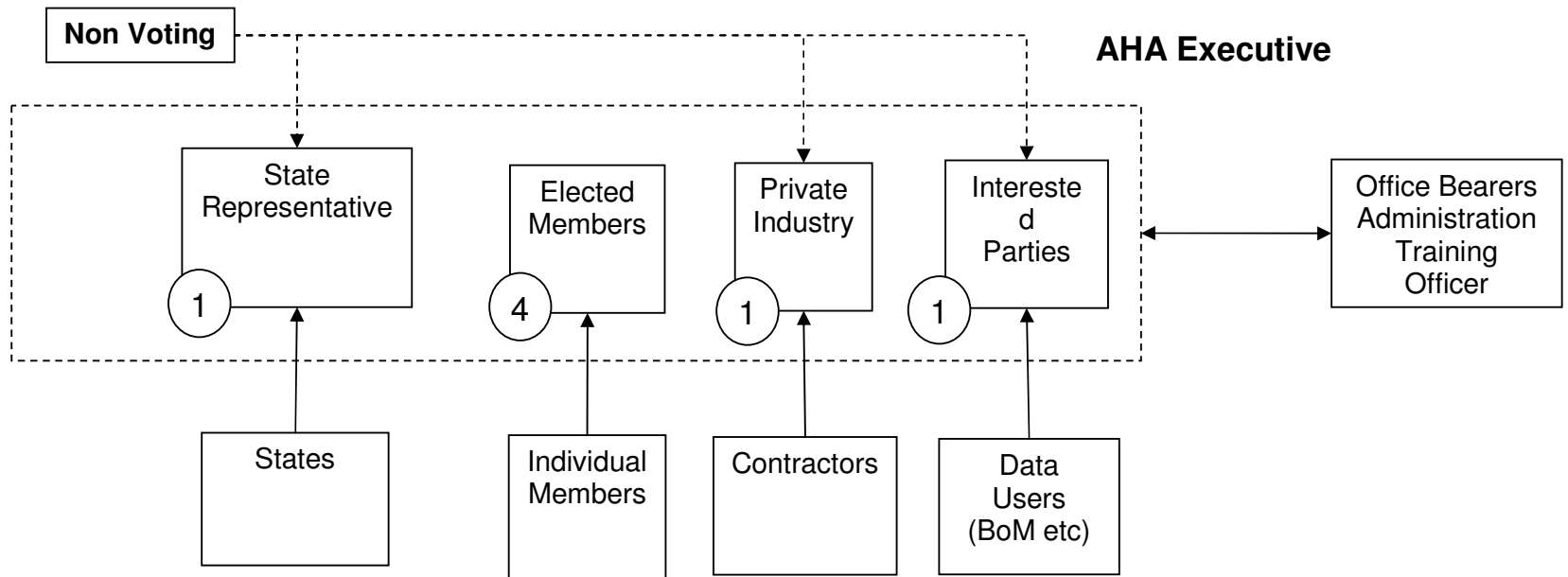
One Field Day.

- Photo Competition to be called across Industry for 2010 Hydrographic Calender.

Following page provides overview of proposed Australian Hydrographers Association Structure (Proposed by Kevin Dennis).



Australian Hydrographers' Association Draft Structure



Notes:

1. Non voting are Invited.

2. State Representatives could be covered under the current Constitution.