

Presidents Report February 2015

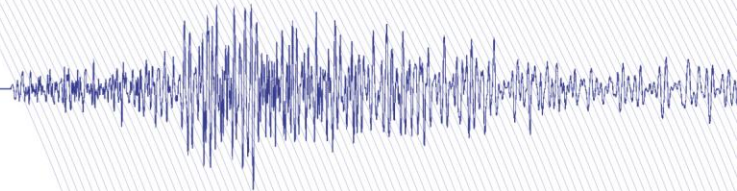
- Society financially secure
- Successful 2015 conference with surplus in line with ASEG needs
- Consolidation of change of secretariat –
- Severing of relationship with CASM
- Membership database issues resolved now using Currinda software for better management
- Record \$ contribution to Research Foundation
- Research foundation 25 year review
- Research Foundation heading for major changes with Chairman stepping down in near future
- Supporting TESEP (Teacher Earth Science Education Programme) in Eastern Australia
- Review of finances has been ongoing in 2014
- Student membership for Australian based students made free
- Website operational and payments on-line now easier
- Sale of Exploration Geophysics with SEG membership
- Push towards digital only Exploration Geophysics
- Expansion of Preview to 60 pages
- Start of history collection – needs work and volunteers
- President and past president visit to Houston SEG
- President and past President visit to EAGE Near Surface Athens
- OzStep program launched – discussions on taking it overseas
- Successful visiting lecturers form EAGE and SEG
- Fedex and standing committees need more and younger members

As ASEG president I am pleased to report that the society is in good financial position and active across most states in Australia. Our membership is somewhat diminished due I believe to the decline in exploration spending but there remains a solid base.

The Melbourne Conference made a surplus of \$450,000 due to the efficient committee and particularly the Conference Treasurer Theo Aravanis who was induced to take on the role of Federal treasurer. Part of his role has been to look at what surpluses are really needed.

The Perth 2015 conference looks to be a major success with around 900 delegates and a predicted surplus of \$240,000 in line with the needs of the ASEG.

In 2014 the Federal Executive (Fedex) terminated the contract with CASM for the provision of professional Secretariat services. We were not happy with their management of our affairs and in particular with the membership databases. Under management by Kim Frankcombe we called for expressions of interest and interviewed three likely contenders in Sydney and Melbourne to replace CASM.



The Association Specialists (TAS) a group that has run successful conferences for ASEG in the past were chosen from these candidates. Our contact there is Ben Williams and the office is in St Leonards in Sydney. Details are on our website.

Our major task in 2014 was getting the membership database under control. Under CASM there were at least 3 and possibly 5 or more databases in existence. We were losing respect from members. Some members were receiving multiple mailed copies of journals, emails etc. There appeared no link between member's renewal preferences and what publications were being sent out.

TAS recommended switching to a professional databases software provider Currinda to manage our database. This was implemented and Katherine McKenna spent many days massaging the various databases into a final single record. It was not a simple task but it seems that we are now over this problem. Currinda sits behind the website so members log in via Currinda to get access.

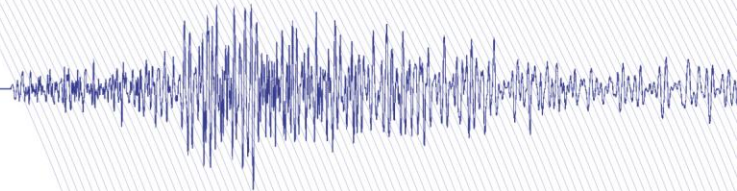
A more worrying note is that we appear to be losing members. The previous state of the membership databases makes this unclear but despite the impending conference our membership is down on numbers at the same time last year.

In addition there was a major effort by Theo Aravanis to get the finances into shape. There were many outstanding invoices potentially written off by CASM that Theo and Ben have followed up with some success. There also some provisions been put in place to ensure at least some of these items no longer occur. Theo has also been working with the Finance Committee (mostly Noll Moriarty) to evaluate what the society needs to keep in reserve and what kind of surpluses need to be generated by conferences. Theo has instituted a new account coding system that is more logical than that used by CASM. The new system came into effect for the 2015 year. Theo being a geophysicist has also developed a series of graphs which clearly show the state of finances against budget at each monthly meeting. At the end of my year as president we will have a much better idea on the state of the society's finances.

As part of the withdrawal from CASM we also discovered we were paying for listing in White Pages in all states. We advised CASM that we had not approved this listing and left it for CASM to resolve payment.

In the 25th year of the ASEG Research Foundation the ASEG donated some \$142,060 to the RF for approved projects; this was more than the society had budgeted. Research projects have gradually become more postgraduate focused in recent years. A 25 year review paper was published in the last Preview. While the Research Foundation is an independent entity to the ASEG it remains dependent upon the ASEG for funds. To provide certainty to the RF and allow proper annual budgeting for the ASEG the Fedex has capped the annual donation in future years at \$100,000, indexed for inflation.

The concept of a self-funding Foundation has not eventuated but I feel that future committees of the RF should look at how this may be possible, similar to the SEG Foundation. The Chair of the Research Foundation Phil Harman has indicated he would like to step down. I would urge potential volunteers to fill this role to contact Phil.



The ASEG also supported the TESEP (Teacher Earth Science Education Programme) in Eastern Australia with a \$25,000 grant. In WA a similar program (STWA – Science Teachers Western Australia) is funded by companies.

In 2015 Phil Schmidt took on the role of President Elect and relinquished head of the Publications Committee. This role was taken up by Peter Hatherly; who developed a draft publications strategy paper that will be considered by Council.

Marl Lackie has continued as Editor of Exploration Geophysics

John Theodoridis finished a two year stint as Preview Editor and the position was taken up by Lisa Worrall. Lisa has expanded Preview to almost 60 pages (a normal issue) and is examining ways to take Preview into digital format using an App. She has also been examining ways to overcome the problems of publication by CSIRO Publishing that plagued John Theodoridis during his term. A face to face meeting was organised this year to try and resolve some of the problems.

The website development has been slower than we would have liked. It is operational and most of the bugs ironed out but we can improve it further. Whether we like it or not the web will be our main delivery portal for most of our functions in the future.

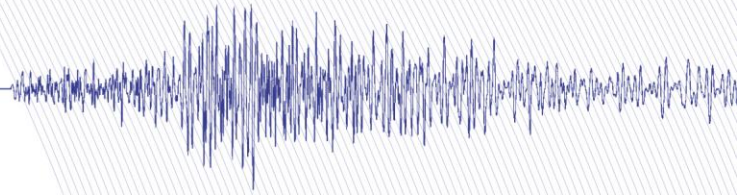
The future direction for the ASEG website should include

- a seamless link to membership page and membership renewal;
- a seamless link to publications so they appear as ASEG rather than CSIRO publications;
- uploads of workshop proceedings
- a historical library of scanned instrument manuals
- a virtual museum of geophysical instruments with background material on use
- seamless links to conference (and past conference) websites
- more advertising perhaps
- more educational material for students
- links to instructional videos possibly on Youtube

I am sure you can think of more things you would like BUT the web committee needs more people to take on these tasks. The committee could expand to 10 people to adequately take on these tasks.

This year Wendy Watkins took on alone the task of Education Committee which is clearly a major role for the society. With support from Koya Suto she instituted the OzStep program as well as oversaw the distinguished lecturer programs from EAGE and SEG. This committee needs to expand in 2015 to at least 3 people and preferably 5. Duties of these 5 people would be

1. Overall management
2. Manage OzStep minerals program
3. Manage OzStep petroleum program
4. Manage SEG distinguished lecturers



5. Manage EAGE distinguished lecturers
6. Develop educational material on the website – 2 to 3 people

Koya Suto again filled the role of International Affairs liaison. Over the past decade Koya has built up a wide range of international contacts in Asia, Europe and Nth America. He has overseen the links with SEG Japan and Korean SEG as well as developed MOUs with Mongolia and Brazil. Koya represented the ASEG at 4 conferences since the last ASEG conference and as president I also represented the ASEG at 4 overseas conferences.

The SEG conference remains the most important for the ASEG to attend. From our continuing involvement we get access to SEG distinguished lecturers and short course and from my trip to Houston we have negotiated a profit share for an upcoming AAPG conference in Melbourne. Attending these conferences is costly. The Federal Executive has initiated a review into our overseas representation so that we will be able to both target our representation where it is needed most and ensure that the society allows enough funds for the travel if the Society's representatives are not able to get part funding by coordinating their travel for the society with travel for business purposes.

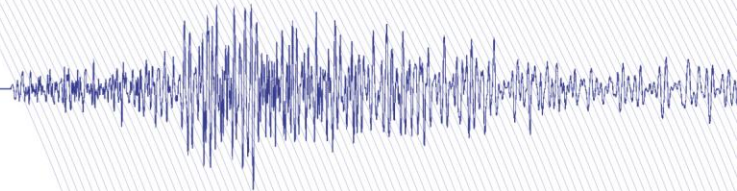
- SAGA (Kruger NP) – Greg Street
- SEG (Houston) – Koya Suto
- SEGJ (Yokohama) -- Greg Street
- SAGEEP (Boson) -- Koya Suto
- EAGE (Amsterdam) -- Koya Suto
- SEG (Denver) -- Greg Street, Koya Suto
- EAGE NS (Athens) – Greg Street and Koya Suto
- GeoSEA (Yangon) – Greg Street

The history committee of the ASEG is one of the most active and has enough members to be considered a Specialist Group. Mostly these are superannuated older members like myself and dominantly male.

The major role has moved from history of the ASEG and members towards history of what members have done and trying to preserve pieces of significant older equipment. The concept of an historical collection of instruments is a reality with CGG donating a few palate loads of equipment and more is promised from NSW Geological Survey among others. But we need a home for this equipment where it can be curated appropriately and put on display for the public. In addition Roger Henderson has started on collating historical

Kim Frankcombe posed the idea of a virtual collection on the website where members could see pictures of instruments and the backing manuals as well as the history of the instrument. This is probably the easiest route to start with but it remains a goal to get some material on display in museums. It still requires work in the scanning of manuals and photographing of instruments.

Dave Robson is stepping down from the Technical Standards committee at this meeting to be replaced as head by Tim Keeping. The committee remains active and it is pleasing that standards developed by ASEG are being



adopted elsewhere. During the year the ASEG president wrote to the Head of CSIRO to ask him to consider taking an active role in the evaluation of ‘new techniques’ that fall into the ‘Black Box’ Black Magic’ range; we await his response.

The Federal Executive has continued the work it began in 2013 on developing and implementing a strategic plan for society. Our membership numbers have remained fairly static over the last decade, and our members are ageing. The kinds of services we offer our members have remained mostly unchanged. At the Council meeting prior to the Perth Conference we will begin a discussion on new kinds of services that members want from the society. In 2014 we initiated a Specialist Group for Early Career Geophysicists with Millicent Crowe as interim Chair. The Specialist Group will hold its first planning meetings at the Perth Conference. We now look forward to setting up new Specialist Groups that are discipline focussed and welcome approaches for members keen to take up this opportunity.