

Railway Technical Society of Australasia



Annual General Meeting – Minutes

Notice is given to current financial members of the Railway Technical Society of Australasia of the 2009 National Annual General Meeting:

DATE: Tuesday 17 November 2009
TIME: 1.00pm – 1.30pm
LOCATION: AusRail Plus Conference
Adelaide Convention Centre
North Terrace, Adelaide SA

1. Welcome / Apologies

Apologies

Alton England
George Erdos
Duncan McLeod

Paul Trevaskis
Steve Hooper

Piers Brogan
John Hoyle

Attendees:

Scott Elauront
Dale Coleman
Ravi Ravitharan
Daniel Martucci
Mark Stallbaum
John Furness
Stephen Townsend
Ian Fox
John Adams
Bruce Morgow
John Suttelley
Lucky Soegitd
Martin Baggott
Pearl Ansley

Daniel Richter
William Laidlaw
Mark Wishart
Russell Trevaskis
Andrew Hunt
Rebecca Taylor
Colin Cole
Todd Caban
Philip Laird
Dean Jenkin
Phillip Campbell
John Jordan
Robert Schweiger

Katharina Gerstmann
John Watsford
Andrew Honan
Henry van Ginkel
John Gardiner
John Scott
Peter Steel
Graham Tew
John Goodall
Lindsey Day
Aiden Stanger
Eric Englund
John Dring

Martin Baggott opened and welcomed all attendees to the Annual General Meeting.

2. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at the Perth Convention Exhibition Centre on the 9th September 2008 to be confirmed

John Watsford moved that the minutes be accepted as a true and accurate recording 2008 Annual General Meeting, Rebecca Taylor seconded and all approved.

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Martin Baggott faewelled and thanked outgoing members of the Executive Committee; Andrew Honan (Deputy Executive Chair), Chris Venn-Brown (Chair of the Education Sub-Committee) and Daniel Martucci and Rebecca Taylor (Special Interest Representatives). John Goodall was officially welcomes as the new Western Australia Chair, Katharina Gerstmann as the New South Wales Chair, and Mark Stallbaum as Chair of the Technical and Investigations Sub-Committee.

Martin Baggott made note that the proceedings from the Executive Committee meeting held Monday 16 November 2009 will be available on the RTSA website; along with minutes of the Annual General Meeting and appropriate reports.

3. Chairman's Address

A copy of the Executive Chairman's Annual General Meeting Report may be found at **MA 1**.

Martin Baggott spoke on his report, noting that

- The RTSA website (www.rtsa.com.au) is a primary source of communication to our members.
- The membership statistics listed in the report at MA 1 is incorrect, membership is currently (at 17 November 2009) 1,251 individual (averages at 3 new members per week) plus 18 corporate members.
- The RTSA is currently in a very strong financial situation (see Item 6), and funds will be ploughed back into the industry for the benefit of all members.

During 2009 – an 'off' year for the RTSA's Biennial Conference on Railway Engineering (CORE), there have been numerous achievements worth noting;

1. Local state based activities

Including 54 chapter meetings, regional and joint meetings, plus site visits and social events. The Chapters have also focused on bringing in relevant and senior speakers from other industries to continue varied and interesting technical programs. Martin Baggott expressed his thanks to the Chapter Chairs and their Committees for their continued efforts and commitment to these events.

2. Society wide events

The *Meet the Railway People Expo* held in Victoria was an exceedingly successful pilot and will be rolled out to other states during 2010. This initiative also received a nomination for the ARA Corporate Award, the results of which are to be announced at AusRail 2009.

STORE 2009 – the study tour of Metro's in Asia, organised through the NSW Chapter of the RTSA had 27 attendees including 9 young engineers. Planning for future study tours to commence shortly. The NSW Chapter also hosted the pilot for the *YouTube Video Competition* which will become a national competition in 2010.

Other society wide events have included the Professional Development Assessment Program (PDAP) and seminars, input to policies and submissions, weekly e-mails and newlinks as well as both the Chapter newsletters and the quarterly Rail Horizons.

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3. Member recognition and encouragement

The Society recognises excellence through the Awards Sub-Committee (chaired by John Dring), including the:

- Annual Student Thesis Award
- Annual Individual Award
- Annual Young Railway Engineers Award
- Annual Contact Mechanics Award
- Biennial Industry Award
- Life Membership Award

In addition to the above awards the RTSA also supports young engineers to attend events (including sponsoring three youth to attend AusRail 2009).

It was reiterated that the website is a key communications channel for our members, and is continually updated with relevant events and presentations; and that CORE is an important event and the primary source of funds for the RTSA. CORE 2010 will be in Wellington NZ, and 2012 in Queensland.

Martin Baggott expressed his thanks for the administrative support received from Pearl Ansley at Engineers Australia and the continuing support and contributions from all of the Executive Committee.

Overall, the RTSA has had an active year and hopefully the members have gained a lot of value from it.

4. Correspondence

Over the period since the 2008 Annual General Meeting, a total of 101 pieces of incoming correspondence have been received, and 131 pieces outgoing correspondence have been dispatched by both letter and e-mail. The topics of correspondence were varied and will be publicised on the RTSA website.

5. Sub-Committee Reports

Sub-Committee Reports will be uploaded to the RTSA website.

5.1 – Awards Sub-Committee

Thus far in 2009, awards have been presented to the joint authors of the successful Railway Engineering Student Thesis, as well as two runners up in this category. It was pleasing to be able to arrange for two of the presentations to be made at functions arranged by the students' home universities. Also in 2009 the Young Railway Engineer award has been made to two different recipients. Regrettably, no nominations were received for the Contact Mechanics Award.

The only outstanding award to be made in 2009 is the Individual Award, which will be announced and presented by the Executive Chairman at the AusRail Gala Dinner.

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In 2010, the cash value of the Railway Engineering Student Thesis Award and the Contact Mechanics Award respectively has been raised to \$4,000 and the Young Railway Engineer Award to \$1,000.

Nominations for both the 2010 Railway Engineering Students Thesis Award and the Contact Mechanics Award close on 27 November 2009; and nominations for the Young Railway Engineer Award, the Industry Award and the Individual Award close on 28 February 2010.

Redesigned nomination forms can be found at the RTSA website; and we hope to revive many quality submissions. John Dring also noted that additional nomination forms may be found on the RTSA website; including a nomination form for RTSA Life Membership and a form for proposals regarding awards in the Order of Australia and encouraged members to view them.

5.2 – Education Sub-Committee

Chris Venn-Brown has resigned as Chair; and the Education Sub-Committee has now been replaced by the Professional Development Sub-Committee which Ravi Ravitharan has agreed to Chair. The Sub-Committee's focus for 2010 will include hosting *Meet the Railway People Expos* in each Chapter, and PDAP for gaining chartered status.

5.3 – Government Relations Sub-Committee

Not reported on.

5.4 – Standards Sub-Committee

Not reported on.

5.5 – Technical Sub-Committee

Not reported on.

6. Financial Report

The RTSA ended the 2008-09 financial year with a \$670,330 surplus. The total income (including profits from CORE, bank interest and subscriptions) was \$556,257, and expenditure was \$241,954 (which included \$106,606 towards conferences, study tours and events, \$16,210 towards awards and prizes, \$20,792 towards chapter events and \$50,450 for executive costs including financial audits etc).

The Society is reliant on subscriptions and CORE surplus; CORE 2008 in Perth made over \$1,000,000 which shows just how much one bad CORE could affect the RTSA. Because of that, the RTSA will always hold a surplus as back-up.

Martin Baggott thanked Robert Schweiger for his considerable efforts through his role as Executive Treasurer.

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7. Special Interest Representatives

Daniel Martucci and Rebecca Taylor have now completed their two year term as Special Interest Representative's on the Executive Committee and were thanks for their valuable contributions.

Three nominations have currently been received to fill their positions as Special Interest Representatives (the Executive hopes for two or more on the Committee), any further nominations are to be received by Pearl Ansley by the end of day.

8. General Business

Martin Baggott opened the floor for questions.

1. Has the RTSA considered what surplus it should carry; so that profits are directed to activities and not used to build up a reserve?

The RTSA has already started to consider how members can benefit from the excess funds, which thus far has included increasing prize money for awards, supplementing young engineers to attend the study tour of Asia and running events available to all members. The RTSA does not want to accumulate fund for any other reasons than to a) keep the Society financially viable, and b) add value to the membership. The reason these reserves have grown is because the previous two CORE's were above the RTSA's expectation – and because of this we've been able to keep future activities affordable (for instance CORE 2010 is only approx \$900 NZD)

2. Are the RTSA planning any further publications?

The Executive Committee has just agreed and signed off on the Strategic Plan to 2016 and beyond, which includes a framework on how we operate and outcomes the RTSA hopes to achieve. It is a dynamic document to be reviewed regularly, and will be made available shortly on the RTSA website. A broadcast will be made to the membership once made available.

3. Has the RTSA considered changing the age restriction on free membership for undergraduate students?

As a Technical Society of Engineers Australia, the RTSA has to operate under their financial scheme; however the RTSA will look into Engineers Australia's age restrictions and consider at the next Executive Committee meeting.

9. 2010 Annual General Meeting

The 2010 Annual General Meeting will be held at CORE 2010 in Wellington, New Zealand.

Martin Baggott thanked all in attendance and closed the meeting.