

RTSA NSW CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2010 EDITION



NEXT MEETING

AND NOW FOR SOMETHING DIFFERENT !!

This month we will have two Young Engineers presenting on two contemporary projects of interest to members



TECHNICAL PRESENTATION

VENUE:

Central Station
Meeting Room
(Opposite Platform 2,
Beside Lost Property)

DATE:

Wednesday 1st September
2010

TIME:

11.30am (for noon start)

*LIGHT REFRESHMENTS
WILL BE PROVIDED*

Michael McCallum of RailCorp will give a presentation on Noise Mitigation on the Epping – Chatswood Rail Line, while Adam Gaffney of Trackwork Services Alliance will speak about the Dunmore Capital Works Project.

These two short presentations should make for an entertainingly different meeting of considerable interest to members.

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WORDS FROM THE CHAIR

Welcome to the August edition of the RTSA NSW newsletter.

At this time of the year it is appropriate to look back on the past 12 months – and what a year it has been for the NSW Chapter. 2009/2010 has been, in many respects, an exceptional and very successful year as membership to the RTSA has increased significantly as has average attendances at the monthly meetings.

Meet the Railway People Expo

The NSW Chapter held a successful Meet the Railway People Expo in Sydney during July as part of its ongoing long-term commitment to the rail industry. The RTSA seeks to play its part in helping to attract and retain the brightest undergraduates.

Aimed at undergraduate students and graduates from NSW Universities the Expo sought to highlight some of the exciting career opportunities available to them within the rail industry. A full illustrated report is included in this issue.



Annual Dinner

Our Annual Dinner was held on 5th of August at the Royal Automobile Club Australia. We managed to squeeze in 100 guests before we were forced to close the booking requests.

Our guest presenter was Miss Vivienne King, Group General Manager Strategy & Service Development at RailCorp. The subject for the night was 'Our culture - We are all part of the solution'. Filling in for Rob Mason, the expectations were high, however Vivienne's

presentation to the 100 guests on the tasks faced daily by RailCorp was particularly interesting and Vivienne was able to clearly show RailCorp's intention to change the culture of the organization and to work more closely with the private sector. Guests were delighted with her openness to share the direction of RailCorp and the challenges that they face in achieving these goals.

AGM

After many years' faithful service to the RTSA, Chris Venn-Brown and Basil Hancock decided to step down from the committee. I would like to express my deepest thanks to Chris and Basil for their on-going support and commitment. Without their willingness to get in and get it done, the RTSA and the NSW Chapter in particular would not have improved as much as it has. We wish Chris and Basil all the best and know that we will still see them at meetings from time to time.

The following members were elected at our AGM on 4th August 2010 to serve on the NSW Committee for the forthcoming year.

Chapter Chair – Katharina Gerstmann
Deputy Chapter Chair – Coen Stoltz
Secretary – John Watsford
Treasurer – Andrew Mackay

Committee Members: Andrew Honan, Malcolm Cluett, Candice Ng, Paul Harris, Bill Laidlaw, Sarah-Ann Brennan, Pascal Sueess, Max Michell, Silvia Fedakova and Varun Kashyap.

I look forward to working with the new committee and hope to put together an interesting and informative program of activities for 2010/2011. As always, all suggestions or requests welcome.

Katharina Gerstmann
Chair – NSW Chapter

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WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

For any organisation to survive it is essential that it recruits new quality members. The NSW/ACT Chapter membership has increased by an amazing 20% over the past 12 months, to a total of 440 members. At this time, I would like to welcome the following recent new members to our chapter:

Rashed Kabir, Student
John Yuen, KBR
John Chan, Downer Edi Rail
Daniel Thomson, RailCorp
Simon Vaux, TCA
Sarah-Ann Brennan, John Holland
Sharfuddin Shikhor Ahmed, Student
Fiseha Akele, Student
Keerthana Alfred, Student
Khalid Falih Alkahtani, Student
Zhuoran Bu, Student
Peng Chen, Student
Derek Tze Wei Chu, Student
Abhinav Dua, Student
Guan Wen Fang, Student
Christian Gani, Student
Pingshun Alex Huang, Student
Jason Hwang, Student
Lahiru Dilanka Jagathvijaya, Student
Anshulkumar Kothari, Student
Loc Quang Le, Student
Kaiwen Li, Student

Jia Chie Low, Student
Cheng Adrian Luo, Student
Elizabeth Cara McCann, Student
Mohamed Moussa, Student
Dangar Nguyen, Student
Donwei Qi, Student
Xincong Qu, Student
Ali Akbar Samirad, Student
Hassan Omar Sulaiman, Student
Kaniyur Sundareswaran, Novorail at Aurecon
Rinie Tan, Student
Rahul Thavarajah, Student
John Trieu, Student
Evelyn Viengichou, Student
Monita Fandy Yoesman, Student
Reuben Zachariah, Student
Zhiheng Zhao, Student
Nathan Michael Boland, Student
Dusko Bajic, Abigroup
Mark Jones, McArthur
Blanche Sewell, McArthur
Paul Tobin, GHD

TRAVELS OR TRAVAILS? – MAX MICHELL

Since moving north in March I have become something of a frequent long distance traveler, rapidly gaining experience of the wonderfully varied and variable Main Northern line between Morisset and Sydney. It is not that the line is a new experience – I have travelled it casually from back before I care to remember but doing so regularly provides a completely different perspective.

Einstein is universally known for his theory of relativity. As everyone knows all NSW electric multiple unit trains are made up of double deck stock - short cars (the worlds shortest according to repute) in the suburban and outer – suburban areas and the now aging but still elegant and comfortable long inter-urban cars. We are fortunate to be entirely served by the latter, the gracious V sets, apart from the cheerful little two car suburban

RTSA NSW CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

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sets that run down from Newcastle and are collectively known as 'Tinkerbell'.

Given the excellent riding qualities and a few long relatively well aligned sections on our line these trains can get up quite a gallop given half a chance with a northern driver. Given the lead that has been placed in the timetable saddle bags this is not normally required in order to keep time, but is handy to periodically show up the timetables for what they really are, or to make up time on the odd occasions when things have gone a bit awry. In all the trips over the last five months the latest I have been is around 15 minutes after we were wrong roaded down Cowan Bank to get around what I assume was a signal failure. A similarly late train one morning had actually been routed via the North Shore as a result of fallen overhead on the main line, but despite this was only around 12 minutes behind when I caught up with it. Most trains are within a few minutes of time, although it must be said that the quality of train routing and timekeeping seems to decline in proportion to the elevation coming in from Hornsby.

Anyway, getting back to Einstein, my travels have brought on a eureka moment, with two new theories of relativity-

1. The train will always go quicker in daylight than at night
2. The lower deck is faster than the upper deck.

There of course may be more, possibly more complex, theories to come but these will do for now.

One of the interesting things on this line is the variation trip by trip. Take specific routes for instance. On the up I have been via the down at Wyong (overtake freight), the back platform at Wyong, the down platform at Gosford (a scheduled move?), the down track Hawkesbury River to Cowan (overtake freight), the up refuge at Hornsby, the down main from the Hornsby Car Shed to down end of the platforms, Platform 2 (North Shore) at Hornsby on a main line train, and any number of strange routings on the four and six track sections in toward Sydney. In the opposite direction there are fewer opportunities, although there are more scheduled diversions to contend with – West Ryde to Epping, relief road through Hornsby, the 50 km/h Berowra refuge, and

back platform at Gosford all fall into this category. Despite this we have traversed the up line Cowan to Hawkesbury River, as well as run via the up platform at the latter on another occasion to overtake a freight train, and via the up main platform at Wyong. With the slow timetables these sorts of moves generally make little difference to timekeeping, even if they add to the interest of the journey and the bewilderment of some of the punters.

Back in the days of the steam hauled Flyers timings between Sydney and Newcastle were as low as 2h 21m, but there were only three a day on weekdays and less on weekends. Unfortunately most didn't even stop at Morisset so they would have been little more than a photo opportunity as far as I am concerned. By 1992, when the timetable was first rostered for all EMU running (no loco hauled trains), the timetables were, on average, 12 minutes faster than today, such is the passion for slowing things down. Which may explain why some drivers, with wisdom and experience from a distant era, are fully aware of and capable of using the slack to maintain time even under quite adverse conditions. Ten minutes late out of Morisset can still mean an on time arrival in Sydney on days when Sydney suburban area is up to the mark.

With the passion for serving the mass of trivial one and four car platforms on the Northern Line (often with six and eight car trains) there are now very few trains that could even vaguely be called 'Express' and none that are primarily devoted to serving the Newcastle market. The best on the down achieves 2h 35 minutes for the run, while on the up there is one that actually gets through in 2h 30 minutes. This latter train actually spurns Wyong and Tuggerah (the only train in either direction to do so), running express between Morisset and Gosford over track that is well aligned by NSW standards. The distance, 42.4 km, is far enough to allow some fairly spirited running, in fact rather more spirited than the timetable requires. Apart from an 85 km/h curve between Morisset and Wyee, and dominant 70 km/h curves after Lisarow, this section has 100 – 115km/h speed boards. My experience suggests that average speeds from start Morisset to pass Tuggerah, Ourimbah or Lisarow (depending where the train in front

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is) consistently exceeds 100 km/h. Accumulated experience across many runs indicates that a realistic (and legal in this authoritarian state) time between Morisset and Gosford with a capable driver and no signal or other hindrances en route could be as low as 25.5 minutes, which equates to 100 km/h start to stop. The timetable allows 29 minutes, but this includes running up the back of the preceding train despite it not being in the recognized peak at all.

Which brings me to an obscure bit of nonsense on our line. Nine 'little' stations between Berowra and Wyong (i.e. all except Woy Woy, Gosford and Tuggerah) have a basic 60 minute frequency during the day but a 30 minute frequency at night? Newcastle on the other

hand has semi fasts (a relative term) at 60 minute intervals during the day but slow all stations from Berowra trains at 60 minute intervals at night. Stopping at all north of Wyong at night might pass muster since Tinkerbelle is a weekday daytime only type of service, but south of Wyong? It seems at times that a kind of emotional rather than businesslike approach is at large in the halls of power somewhere.

For all its vicissitudes travel by train from up here to down there is a fairly enjoyable experience, offset only by the slow timetables and lousy stopping conditions of many trains. I am sure there will be many more surprises along the way as I rack up more travel on the Great Northern Line. You will hear more.

COMING EVENTS

AUSRail 2010

AusRAIL this year will be held in Perth on 23rd and 24th November with a theme of The Rail Plan: Where? How? Why? As is usual there will be a full program including the Rail Constructors Panel late morning on first day, Road and Rail Discussion Panel and the CEO Forum on the second day. The usual four streams, led respectively by RTAA, RTSA, IRSE and ARIC, will fill the afternoon session on the 23rd. Full details and registration can be found at www.ausrail.com

HIGH SPEED STUDY TOUR

This tour, currently planned for around May 2011, is intended to provide participants with an overview of High Speed Rail developments in Asia, notably in the birthplace of modern high speed in Japan. Korea and Taiwan will also be on the agenda. China, which in a few years will be THE place for high speed, will be worthy of a full tour in its own right in a few years when

the core network under construction is up and running, so it has not been included in this tour.

Details are being worked out as we speak and should be 'launched' at CORE 2010 in Wellington in mid September. This STORE will be two weeks long and will involve a less demanding schedule than the 2009 Metro Study Tour. Costs are yet to be determined, Given that this is a study tour, a condition will be that all participants will produce a report of half a dozen pages on the technology, issues and application of the High Speed Rail visited to the Australian scene – all participants will choose from a list of specific topics so that a number of unique perspectives will be generated

All RTSA members will be circularised at the same time, so if you think you may be interested it would be a good strategy to be prepared in advance.

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EMINENT SPEAKER TOUR

Following each CORE, the Conference on Rail Engineering, a speaking tour is undertaken by a Keynote Speaker. This year, the Eminent Speaker is Professor Andrew McNaughton - Chief Engineer of High Speed Two Ltd and Special Professor of Rail Engineering at Nottingham University UK.

In Andrew's presentation in Sydney, he will explore the market-led demands of the 21st Century for transport paying particular attention to

- long distance
- regional
- urban passenger mobility
- and freight logistics

and the way we will need to develop rail to become the most successful transport mode of the future.

As well as the technology, he will look at the role of the operators and maintainers of the future system and especially the special place and responsibility of Rail Engineers in the new order.

RTSA NSW Chapter Eminent Speaker Tour

Creating the 21st Century Transport System of Choice



Prof. Andrew McNaughton
Chief Engineer of High Speed Two Ltd

Monday, 20th September 2010 at the Sydney Masonic Centre, Northcott Room on Level 5.
66 Goulburn Street – 4.30pm to 6.00pm

Come along and
hear how we can make it happen!

For RSVP and further information visit
<http://rtsaeminentsspeakertour.eventbrite.com>
or contact Silvia Fedakova 0424 781 066

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RTSA ACCESS TO INFORMIT ENGINEERING COLLECTION

RTSA members, who are non-members of Engineers Australia, can now gain direct access to the following

CORE & other RTSA proceedings via Informit Engineering Collection:

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These proceedings include:

- CORE 2008; 2006; 2000; 1998;
- Railway Engineering Conferences 1993, 1991; 1989; 1987; 1985, and
- Wheelset International Conference 1992

Coming soon are CORE 2004; 2002, and Railway Engineering Conferences 1995; 1981 and 1978.

The other papers listed on the database are available to RTSA, non- Engineers Australia members, on pay-per-view basis.

RTSA members who are also Engineers Australia members need to log in via [Resources & Library](#) section to gain free access to the whole Engineers Australia database. If you would like to search only RTSA papers, you need to enter 'Railway' in 'Search Query' box and select 'in SO - Source' field.

RTSA members who are NOT Engineers Australia members can view the proceedings by clicking on the link below and entering your login details. If you do not have a password, please [REGISTER](#) here.

[Click here to view the RTSA Conference Proceedings](#)

AUGUST MEETING REPORT – MALCOLM CLUETT

Speaker - Mr Rob Stevens, Principal, OH Wiring Engineer, KBR speaking on the Trackwork Services Alliance (TSA)

This is an alliance between RailCorp and John Holland. (First alliance that RailCorp has entered into)

Two other companies involved:

- KBR (Detailed Design Work)
- Invensys (Signalling)

Currently seventy multi-disciplined people in the team, which has been operating for two years.

Objectives

- Deliver turnout renewals for RailCorp
- Develop Rail resources for the industry

Achievements

- 70 portions of work completed
- 40 turnout renewals
- 30 design packages
- PEM LEM Turnout Installation System – Australian first
- Strong safety culture

What is the PEM LEM track installation system ?

This uses a number of radio-controlled straddle crane units to roll heavy turnout assemblies into place on temporary track. It speeds up turnout replacement, because the unit can be partially assembled nearby, rather than built in-situ from many pieces.

Future objectives

- Increase amount of work in the pipeline
- Continued resource development
- Continue Innovation
- Introduction of FFU (fibre-reinforced foamed urethane) sleepers

TSA's training and development strategy

- Grow resources
- Deliver turnout replacement
- Long term process to train workers
- 40% of the current rail workforce needs to be replaced in the next five years

A professional development programme has been developed that mirrors RailCorp's internal competency programme for Engineering Authority. Initially developed

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for OHW staff, it will be rolled out for Perway workers too. A competency skills matrix and Mentors are involved in the training. Site based experience and log books are part of the training. The individuals must provide evidence of competency, which will be portable across the industry. Supervision is provided by experienced engineers.

(Three levels of competency are applicable to the private sector.)

It is planned to roll out the training programme to other employers in the industry.

A case study of a young engineer in the Alliance was presented by the speaker.

Technical Lessons from Overhead Wires

Realignment of track and superelevation – affects the correct position of the contact wire. It is vital that the Pantograph is always in the safe contact zone. Misalignments can cause severe delays.

An CAD end-elevation layout diagram of a track, train, OHW and support structure was shown.

Computer-based methods are a vital part of OHW design. The speaker showed some printouts of the system which does the design calculations.

Information is provided for crews to make field adjustments to provide the correct OHW alignment. Any change to the track alignment dictates a change to the OHW alignment too.

Challenges

- Obtaining good survey information, and work-as-built information
- Much of the existing equipment is old, and design information is limited
- Design & construct success are based on integration and cooperation

- Existing equipment uses a variety of hardware
- Future retirements and staff turnover will lead to loss of corporate memory.

RailCorp's OHW system falls into two categories

- Fixed wire plant
- Regulated wire plant (with balance weights on catenary and contact wire)

The former is prone to misalignment due to temperature variations. Regulated wire is used for all new construction.

Constructability and safety are important aspects of the design

The TSA will provide an Inter Disciplinary Check, and provide good work-as-built information.

The speaker provided a number of illustrations showing turnouts, crossovers, etc being rebuilt, and also work to OHW structures. The time available for construction windows are restricted, but the quality of the construction work cannot be compromised.

There is a wide variety of construction plant that has become available in recent years, such as elevating platforms, etc, which is amenable to railway construction. The PEM LEM example has already been given. Concrete sleepers are too heavy to be manhandled.

Concluding Remarks

- TSA has a mandate to develop rail people and to innovate
- After 2 years there are significant achievements & lessons
- OHW leading the way in training/development
- Technical innovations in all disciplines

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Q&A

Q Do the TSA designers get out on the weekend shutdowns ?

A Yes they are encouraged to do this.

Q Regulated wires ?

A There is a programme to roll this out across the network, replacing fixed plant.

Q Post Construction Report ?

A There is a Quality Assurance process for this, included in the Design Report. This is done in-house with the TSA. Instances of non-compliance go to RailCorp.

Q Does approval or acceptance come from RailCorp ?

A Currently yes. Speaker hopes that TSA will become more autonomous.

Q What are FFU sleepers (Fibre-reinforced Foamed Urethane)

A Originated in Japan. Has the advantages of timber sleepers, but a 15-20 year life compared with timber of approx 6 years.

Q Balance weights – how heavy ?

A Depends on the system. There is a 3:1 pulley. Tension is normally 12.5 kN or 18 KN. The masses are modular and can be built up.

CORE2010

CORE 2010 will be held at Wellington Convention Centre, 12 – 14 September 2010. This is a significant biennial railway event showcasing the latest in engineering, technology, planning and operations.

There are only three weeks left to secure your place at this must-attend rail event!



RTSA ANNUAL DINNER: - Chris Venn-Brown

The 2010 RTSA NSW Chapter Annual Dinner was held on August 5th at the Royal Automobile Club of Australia. A total of 95 attended, including the dinner speaker. This was nearly three times the attendance of the 2009 dinner. A number of 'young engineers' were present.

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The advertised dinner speaker was Rob Mason, CEO of Railcorp. Unfortunately, due to industrial action in Railcorp that day, he was unable to attend. Vivienne King, Group General Manager Strategy & Service Development presented a talk on his behalf. Vivienne spoke for about 30 minutes and certainly succeeded in 'walking the fine line' between having some technical content on the one hand, and being entertaining on the other. The talk was well received, despite her being a short notice replacement for the programmed speaker.

The dinner itself was held in the 'Macquarie Room', with pre-dinner drinks and canapés in the 'ISC Room'. The number present filled the Macquarie Room very well, and made for a good atmosphere. The ISC Room is smaller, but was suitably sized for the purpose. The general décor and atmosphere of the RACA club sets a very good tone for a function such as this.

The event was timed at 7.00pm for 7:30pm. Initially guests gathered in the ISC Room for pre-dinner drinks, where canapés were served.

At 7-30, guests moved into the Macquarie Room. The MC, Chris Venn-Brown, gave a brief welcome and an outline of the proceedings to come before Chapter Chair, Katharina Gerstmann, provided a short overview of the activities of the Chapter for the past twelve months, and directions for the future.

Following the main course the guest speaker provided her entertaining talk, for which Martin Baggott, Chair of the National Executive offered the vote of thanks.

Dessert and coffee rounded out the night.

During the evening, there were many opportunities for 'networking', and the guests generally made the most of these opportunities. It appeared that the guests generally enjoyed the evening.

□

MEET THE RAILWAY PEOPLE EXPO – 2010: - Candice Ng

The RTSA New South Wales Chapter had held their first annual "Meet the Railway People Expo" at Pyrmont on Saturday 23rd July for the promotion of the rail industry to graduate and undergraduate students. It was an honour to witness the event completed with great success with over 100 students, more than 90 professionals attending and 23 rail organisations exhibiting. We received much positive feedback after the event and most with the question of 'when is next?'

The Expo event was designed to showcase the development and the future of the railway industry. It provided an exclusive communication channel for students and graduates to obtain information about employment, workplace internships or scholarship opportunities offered within the railway organisations.

The event consisted of two sections. The first part was a discussion forum with the title – 'A Career in Rail – All you need to know'. It was formed by a group of four railway professionals and graduates to discuss about the culture, opportunities and own experience of the rail industry. The second part was an exhibition which provided students with free time to visit company's display booths, from where they gained a good understanding of individual companies, their operating customs and offer of opportunities.

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During the presentation, our young engineers, Sarah and Peter, aptly described their path to joining this exciting industry and how their employers raised their interest and provided them with opportunities in working for the industry. Brian successfully intrigued students into envisioning a bright future in the rail industry with the possibility of overseas experience. Finally, Louise provided students with an insight of the job market and potential employers in the industry. The audience were greatly drawn to the presentations and warmly responded by asking many questions at the end of the section.



Left to right: Katharina Gerstmann (NSW Chapter Chair), Peter Munro (Downer EDI), Louise Grant (Randstad), Brian Hastings (Interfleet Technology), Sarah-Ann Brennan (John Holland), John Watsford (UGL)

After a warm-up from the presentation, the students were all ready for a face-to-face contact with the organisations' representatives, in the second part of the event at the exhibition. I was surprised and pleased to see how much effort the rail companies put into attracting and communicating with students – colourful banners, unique booth set up, lucky draws, lollies and souvenirs – for a while the venue did project a feeling of flea or fun fair market. It was of certain pleasure to see that students and rail representatives blended in such an admirably way.



Face-to-face conversations with exhibiting companies.

“Meet the Railway People Expo” will be an annual event for RTSA.

RTSA NSW CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

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The next Expo will take place in Brisbane on the 9th October 2010. For further information on RTSA Professional Development activities like these, please contact Ravi Ravitharan, Chairman RTSA Professional Development Sub-Committee (email: ravi.ravitharan@eng.monash.edu.au).



Series E5 Prototype – High Speed Rail In Japan

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FUTURE MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Wednesday 1 September 2010 11.30 for 12.00	Two or three short topics Young Members Presentations	Meeting Room Central Station Concourse Sydney
Monday 20th September 16.00 for 16.30	Eminent Speaker Andrew McNaughton	See separate advice in this newsletter
<i>Wednesday 6 October</i> <i>2010</i> <i>11.30 for 12.00</i>	<i>To be Confirmed</i>	<i>Meeting Room</i> <i>Central Station Concourse</i> <i>Sydney</i>
Wednesday 3 November 2010 11.30 for 12.00	Automatic Train Protection Craig Stanfield Project Director ATP, RailCorp	Meeting Room Central Station Concourse Sydney
Wednesday 1 December 2010 11.30 for 12.00	Christmas Heritage Topic Rebirth of a Legend: 3801 in the 21st Century Craig Mackey (NSWRM) and Chris Hoskin (Halcrow)	Meeting Room Central Station Concourse Sydney

Engineers Australia members are reminded that attendance at RTSA technical meetings contributes

towards CPD requirements. Each RTSA technical meeting generally has a value of 1 CPD point.

RTSA NSW CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

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Pascal Sueess			
Sarah-Ann Brennan			
Varun Kashyap			

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CONTRIBUTIONS TO NEWSLETTER

Contributions for publication in Newsletter are welcome. As far as possible they should be kept to a reasonable length (articles desirably no more than 2 pages; Letters to the Editor ½ page) and should be relevant to the interests of members.

By far the best way to submit contributions is by e-mail – to the Editor at max412@gmail.com for preference.

In general hard copy material that has to be transcribed into electronic format for publication will tend to be given lower priority than material supplied in electronic format.