



RTSA

Railway Technical Society of Australasia

Strategic Plan to 2015

November 2011

Authorisation:

RTSA Executive Chair

15 January 2012

Date

Introduction

The purpose of this RTSA Strategic Plan is to provide a framework within which the Executive Committee shall act in ensuring the long-term growth and success of the RTSA as the premier organisation specifically representing railway professionals in Australasia.

That objective will require that the Executive:

- Provide for the on-going financial viability of the RTSA;
- Broaden the relevance and appeal of the RTSA's activities and services; and
- Recognise two principles which should apply in parallel, those being:
 - The continuing centrality of the Society's Objectives and Activities as set out in the Constitution Sections 5 and 6; and
 - The importance of innovation and the encouragement of new ideas, particularly those put forward by young professionals and by members who are not professional engineers.

The Strategic Plan consists of:

- An Action Plan setting out actions seen as appropriate for the year to March 2012; and
- A SWOT Statement listing strengths weaknesses threats and opportunities identified by the Executive at the Strategic Conference of July 2010.

Actions have been categorised as follows:

- Improvement Actions;
- Growth Actions;
- Leadership and Development Actions;
- Financial Actions.

Some actions have been identified only once but overlap the categories nominated.

The Executive has the primary role of taking the actions forward though individual responsibilities will be delegated from time to time. Those allocated responsibility for progressing action items may need to generate specific "tactical" plans to support the overall strategy. All responsible parties will be expected to report progress to the Executive Chair, not less frequently than at the half-yearly Executive Meetings.

In readiness for the Executive Meeting of the First Half of each year, the Executive shall review the Action Plan and the SWOT Statement with the objectives of:

- Assessing the progress made over the past year in achieving the various actions foreshadowed and the success in taking advantage of strengths & opportunities and mitigating weaknesses & threats identified;
- Implementation of any corrective actions deemed necessary ; and
- Updating the Action Plan and SWOT Statement for the year ahead.

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Action Plan

Issue	RTSA Action	Measure	Responsibility	Timing
A- Improvement Actions				
A1- Recognition and support within the rail industry	Take all opportunities to attract recognition and support from the decision makers in the industry and, in particular, be pro-active in providing technical support to ARA. Respond to all government enquiries relating to rail transport, either directly or in conjunction with ARA as appropriate, and publicise RTSA responses on the web and in the Newsletters.	Acknowledgement by peer organisations or in the media.	Submissions & Inquiries Sub-committee	Ongoing, as suitable opportunities arise
A2- RTSA Brand	Take all opportunities to promote and strengthen the recognition and favourable association of the adopted “ RTSA ” brand, and the new logo.	Acknowledgement by peer organisations and persons.	All Marketing and Communications Sub-committee	Ongoing
A3- Relationships with EA and IPENZ	Continue to utilise the professional reputation of EA and IPENZ as the background of RTSA’s activities. Committee & Chapter Chairs are to promote the effective cooperation with EA and IPENZ personnel.	A subjective view of the level of collaboration	Committee & Chapter Chairs.	Report by exception in annual review.
A4- Annual Themes	So far as is possible and appropriate; RTSA will select events and devise publicity which will be consistent with and support EA’s Annual themes. “ <i>Regional Engineering</i> ” is the 2012 theme.	Number of events and amount of consistent publicity generated.	Chapters. Marketing and Communications Sub-committee	Ongoing

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Issue	RTSA Action	Measure	Responsibility	Timing
A5- Relationships with industry bodies such as IRSE, PWI, and RTAA.	Reinforce RTSA's role and cooperate with other industry bodies. Senior Executive Members will meet at least once per year with representatives of each organisation to coordinate programs, responses to enquiries and special events and will report to the Executive.	DONE / NOT DONE, yearly.	Executive Chair.	Status report at 2nd Half Executive meeting.
A6- The position of CORE as a premier event in the rail industry's calendar and as a major contributor to RTSA's financial viability.	Empower CORE Organising Committees with the support of the CORE Advisory Panel and a CORE Manual to ensure the achievement of top class professional and financial outcomes from each conference.	Budget achieved. Growth in numbers of registrations.	CORE Advisory Panel Chair	CORE reports at each Advisory meeting to the Chair
B- Growth Actions				
B1- Breadth of membership by industry sectors, in the "operations" sector in particular.	Membership Sub-Committee will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compile a list of Industry Sectors and analyse the Market Study results and membership lists to assess representation within each of those sectors. • Assess RTSA's strengths and devise activities likely to appeal to groups identified as under-represented. • Estimate the number of entities and individuals involved and the possible target membership resulting. 	DONE / NOT DONE	Membership Sub-committee.	Start- Immediate. Report targets to Executive- September 2011.

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B2- Expansion of membership	<p>In respect of industry sectors identified as under-represented and the women and younger personnel already identified as being membership target groups; the Membership Sub-committee and Chapters will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop numerical targets for the various classes of membership for the coming year, • Arrange appropriate activities and, in conjunction with the Marketing and Communications Sub-committee, publicise within the industries where recruitment is sought. • Identify any specific action or assistance which may be required of the Executive. 	DONE / NOT DONE half yearly.	Membership Sub-committee and Chapters.	Report progress to Executive-September 2011.
B3- Market Surveys	As follow-up to the 2010 Market Survey and implementation of actions arising; surveys of members will be undertaken to judge the effectiveness of RTSA's program, issues faced by the industry, members' requirements, and possible actions to be pursued by RTSA.	Survey undertaken. Follow-up of previous actions.	Executive Chair.	Next survey in mid- 2013
B4- Website	<p>Develop the upgraded website as RTSA's primary means of communication and transaction and as the principal means of promoting membership of younger people.</p> <p>The website will serve as a portal to the Rail Knowledge Bank, to industry events, and to interactive tools and opportunities for electronic submission of views.</p>	Website and membership statistics	Website Sub-committee	Report progress-September 2011.

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Issue	RTSA Action	Measure	Responsibility	Timing
C- Leadership and Development Actions				
C1- RTSA Succession Planning	<p>Incumbents of the RTSA Executive and its Sub-committees and Chapters shall develop succession plans to ensure continued induction of volunteers to enable the Society to operate.</p> <p>The succession plans shall be maintained on a yearly basis with identified successors being involved in Chapter, sub-committee, or Executive-delegated roles.</p>	DONE / NOT DONE, yearly.	Committee, sub-committee & Chapter Chairs.	Second Half Executive meeting.
C2- Young Member Participation	Funds can be allocated to subsidise young member participation in the RTSA and related events, including study tours or Special Reps and promotional activities.	Value of allocation.	Treasurer to report on year to year affordability and progress.	At budget authorisation.
C3- Professional Development Programs for EA Chartered Status	<p>RTSA will enable fast Professional Development progress by arranging placement and / or mentoring opportunities to graduates and others wishing to secure Chartered status with EA.</p> <p>This will involve conduct of specific PDP presentations in each Chapter each year and in association with final year and graduate “careers nights”, responding to the needs of the graduates in each Chapter’s area..</p>	One presentation yearly.	Chapter Chairs.	Yearly.
C4- Professional Development for young engineers.	To reinforce its continuing professional development role with young engineers; RTSA will conduct two university or school presentations per year through an open day at institutions selected on a rotational basis.	Two presentations per year.	Prof Development Sub-Committee Chair or Special Interest Executive member.	Program to be proposed in 2 nd Half Executive meeting.

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C5- Awards	To continue to improve RTSA's awards schemes by attracting higher participation rates, the Awards Sub-Committee will ensure that at least six candidates are considered for each award. Individual candidates may be considered in more than one year.	Six candidates for each award.	Chapter Chairs.	To be reported in 2 nd Half Executive Meeting.
C6 - Take a leadership position in relation to learning through existing and proposed education courses.	The Executive will ensure that there are representatives available for Standards Australia, RISSB, CRC and other educational bodies in which an RTSA point of contact is nominated for any subsequent assistance.	Nomination of candidates.	Executive Chair.	Each Executive Meeting.
D- Financial Actions				
D1- Diversity of income.	A diverse stream of income is to be generated so that CORE represents a maximum of 50% of RTSA total income. The Treasurer will lead this diversification initiative.	50% CORE income maximum.	Treasurer to facilitate.	Exec Meeting- Nov.2011.
D2- Financial self-sufficiency of Executive and Chapter level special events.	Routine Chapter events are not expected to be self-funding but special events at the Executive and Chapter levels are to be self funding in aggregate; preferably with surpluses available for Executive action in broader industry initiatives.	Funding applications.	Executive Chair.	Ongoing.

2 SWOT Statement - Adopted at RTSA Strategic Conference of 23rd July 2010

<p style="text-align: center;">STRENGTHS</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Financial</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robust financial position, with income from CORE conferences • Support from EA and IPENZ • Inputs from volunteers of Chapter and Executive committees <p style="text-align: center;">Membership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on individuals • Inclusive membership system, open to all industry participants • Network potential • Regular changes to office bearers introduces fresh ideas while maintaining corporate knowledge <p style="text-align: center;">Identity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Represents all industry professionals, unlike IRSE, RTAA, PWI etc. • Technical strength differentiation, shown by CORE Conferences. • Significant repository of technical knowledge with strong capacity for Information sharing • Professional development initiatives, including CPD, awards, STOREs, careers information, and recruitment. • Australasian body, with opportunities for wider international activity <p style="text-align: center;">Functioning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular and relevant technical meetings, site visits, study tours and speaker tours • Short lead time of those functions 	<p style="text-align: center;">WEAKNESSES</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Financial</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over- dependence on CORE for funding <p style="text-align: center;">Membership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Narrowness of the membership base by level of education, age and gender. • Weak communications with members, with upgrading of newsletters and website desirable • Limited access for members to material presented in other Chapters <p style="text-align: center;">Identity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of a role for the RTSA in legitimisation and promotion of the railway industry • Confusion of name and identity, with limitation of the appeal of “Society” • Lack of clarity of the benefits of membership • Subsidiary of EA & IPENZ, with transfer of any weaknesses of those bodies. • Weak relationship to ARA, the peak railway industry body. • Weak perception of relevance, with an “old-fashioned” appearance • Little international linkage • Lack of projects and activities, in a structured sense, that link with industry • Lack of interest to members in the topics chosen for presentations and papers <p style="text-align: center;">Functioning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of administrative capacity and reliance on a small group of volunteers
<p style="text-align: center;">OPPORTUNITIES</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Financial</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced opportunities for the railway industry as a whole • Government grants for initiatives • Increase membership and participation by measures such as offering more to EA members, promoting cooperation and networking with the railway community, and facilitating industry experience, (continued) 	<p style="text-align: center;">THREATS</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Financial</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competition to the CORE conferences, in both Australasia or overseas and both for sponsors and attendees • Sensitivity to economic cycles • Effect of membership and marketing restrictions imposed by EA/IPENZ (continued)

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OPPORTUNITIES (Continued)	THREATS (Continued)
<p style="text-align: center;">Membership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage school-age people by measures such as providing tours, access to CORE exhibitions, and careers information • Engage university -age people by measures such as creation of tertiary courses, providing a centralised education portal, or providing scholarships & loans • Provide opportunities for potential employers to place on-line job advertisements or use an expanded “Meet the Railway People” site to connect with students and other potential employees • Active recruitment program, offering personal empowerment and confidence to potential members 	<p style="text-align: center;">Membership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to reach and convey an image of relevance to potential sponsors and members • Generational change and incompatibility • <i>Possibility of conflicts of interest between RTSA activities / submissions and members’ employers</i>
<p style="text-align: center;">Identity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the promotion of the railway industry, particularly by capitalising on the economic, environmental, and quality-of-life benefits offered by rail and by links with EA/ARA. • Develop contacts with industry leaders on a regular basis • <i>Strengthen links with international bodies</i> • <i>Clarify RTSA’s role and benefits of membership- “What’s in it for me”</i> 	<p style="text-align: center;">Identity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to maintain a mutually beneficial relationship with ARA • Competition for membership and influence from other technical bodies- PWI, RTAA, or IRSE • Lack of a clear vision for RTSA’s future • Failure to adapt to industry changes
<p style="text-align: center;">Functioning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrade the website, with improved ability for information sharing, transactions, <i>and rail industry profile.</i> • Create member-only services on the website • Improvement in the quality of and increased promotion of RTSA’s services- CPD, Awards, and STOREs • A greater role for publishing • Utilise media releases, including Catalyst • Utilise YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter • Create social occasions for members 	<p style="text-align: center;">Functioning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overload of office-bearers, with inability to recruit new people to the Executive and Chapter Committees. • Loss of support of volunteers’ employers • Loss of secretarial support from EA • Difficulty with succession planning