

From the President



to the diversity of opinions. A big 'thank you' to the many who had input during the drafting of the many statements we tried – particularly Brad Pillans, who authored the many attempts.

As the tenure of the current Executive draws to a close it is time to reflect on the achievements of the Geological Society of Australia over the last two years.

By far the most lasting achievement has been the finalisation of the new governance structure for the Society. This has been an ongoing work over several years but has come to fruition during the current term. While this has been thrust on to us in order to conform to the *Associations Incorporation Act 1991*, it has also been an opportunity for us to update a governance structure that was first put in place over 60 years ago. This structure has served the Society well over the years but, as time and people's attitudes change, we need to move forward. I believe we are now in a good place to do this. The most obvious change is in the election of the Committee and we are moving through the nomination process at present. I encourage you all to consider the benefits of putting your hand up for election to the new Executive when the time arrives. While the positions do add extra workload to our already busy time schedules, I have found my time to be pleasurable and rewarding. It is also a good opportunity to network with many people who are at the forefront of the geosciences in Australia. Many of the processes for the new Committee will need to be forged over the coming months – it will be an exciting time to be involved. While I have said this before, I thank Sue Fletcher and Jim Ross, among many others, for the efforts they have put into the new structure.

One issue that we inherited from previous Committees is the Climate Change Statement. While it is important for organisations such as ours to have a position on public debates such as anthropogenic input into climate change, it proved too divisive for our membership to achieve, and so we have had to abandon the concept. I realise that this decision is disappointing for many of you but we are a democratic Society and must bow

Following the example set by Brad Pillans (the previous president), I have visited (or will have visited by July) all of the State Divisions during my tenure. This has given me an insight into the workings of the 'engine room' of the Society and I have found the experience very rewarding. During these travels I have been able to interact with members, including Committee members, from around the country. I have found that we all have similar problems and are all working tirelessly to find solutions. The upcoming Council meeting before our AGM in Newcastle is one venue where we can all pool ideas for solutions to some of these problems. A big 'thank you' to all of the committees who have welcomed me during these travels. I think that the Society has a big future if you all continue to put as much enthusiasm and thought into the tasks ahead as I witnessed during my visits. One area of concern is the declining membership. There are many reasons for the lack of commitment to joining Societies such as ours, but I feel it is important for us to investigate ways to reinvigorate the membership.

The Society has been active in the area of geoscience outreach to the broader community. The GSA partly funded a recent tour by Professor Marjorie Chan. Such tours can provide an opportunity to reach out to the broader community and affect community attitudes to the geosciences.

The 2014 Australian Earth Sciences Convention (AESC) will be held in Newcastle from 7 to 10 July with the theme of 'Sustainable Australia'. The AESC is the premier broad-scale Earth Sciences conference on the Australian calendar, and is a credit to the Geological Society of Australia, particularly those who are involved in the long job of planning for an event of this scale. It is important for the members of the Society to attend the conference. It is an important opportunity to network with many of our geoscience colleagues both nationally and internationally. It is also good to provide our student members the opportunity to attend and become aware of the breadth of research in the geosciences. The AESC is one of the possible lures to attract new members to our Society. I encourage all members to attend the convention and I also encourage colleagues to attend (and perhaps join the Society).

Hope to see you all in Newcastle in early July for the AESC.

LAURIE HUTTON
President

TAG The Australian Geologist

SCHEDULE & DEADLINES

ISSUE	COPY	FINISHED ART	INSERTS
SEPTEMBER 2014	25 July	4 Aug	18 Aug
DECEMBER 2014	24 Oct	3 Nov	10 Nov
MARCH 2015	27 Jan	3 Feb	10 Feb
JUNE 2015	20 Apr	28 April	21 May

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