

## Keep calm and do geophysics

I have written a welcome to the 2015 ASEG-PESA Conference elsewhere in this issue. I can well understand that some ASEG Members may not be able to make to the conference because 2014 was not a good year for the geophysical industry. The year started with a gradual decline in metal prices and ended with a big drop in the price of oil. Expenditure on exploration and particularly expenditure on exploration geophysics, being a big ticket item, is usually the first item to be cut from the budget when companies tighten their belts. Unfortunately, that is the way of our industry and the way of the world.

We see 'short termism', or the excessive focus on short-term goals at the expense of long-term interests, all too often in Australian politics and it has prevented major expenditure on public works projects. In exploration short termism has resulted in investors rushing into mineral and oil exploration companies when the prices of metals or oil are high. However, all too often, a deposit discovered in boom times will come into production during a slump, when it may be unprofitable, and the company that holds the deposit ends up sliding into receivership.

In exploration it is sometimes the second or third company to explore an area that finds a significant deposit. Short termism means that it is often the second or third company to own a deposit that will make money from it. As an exploration geophysicist I think it would be great if we could be doing the greenfields work now (during a downturn) and move into brownfields and near deposit studies when prices pick up. Right now there is plenty of open ground to explore and lots of under-utilised professionals, geophysical equipment and drilling rigs. There is also a lot of cash looking for good investment but the investment paradigm we are locked into will not allow long term thinking.

It may only be possible for the industry to break out of short termism with some government intervention, perhaps in the way of investment incentives for greenfields exploration. Such incentives should move towards brownfields as prices improve, but that would be asking too much of our politicians. One only has

to look at the mining tax to see how little politicians understand the mining industry and I am not talking about its introduction, more about the euphoria when it was repealed just as iron and coal prices were sliding away and no more tax was payable. Wouldn't it great to be paying a super-profits tax today!!

There was a lot of chest beating about the mining tax which should have been directed at getting the money back into exploration incentives rather than repeal of the tax. Federal governments of both persuasions have long promised exploration incentives and it is time they put their money where their mouth is. But as Daryl Kerrigan would say 'Tell 'em they're dreamin'. All I can say is 'Keep calm and do geophysics'.



*Hope to see you at my favourite beach in the early morning during the conference.*

On a more pleasing note it seems that governments and education authorities are starting to recognise that we will need scientists in the future. There are far too many students graduating with degrees and with nowhere to go. Whilst I am the first to agree that a tertiary education is a great way to develop as an individual, being underemployed does not particularly help with personal development. I firmly believe that a basic training in languages, mathematics and science, with a bit of history and geography thrown in, should be continued right through to Year 12. I believe I was lucky to go through high school when this was the model, and the extra courses in woodwork, art and music did not do me any harm.

One way we hope to address the need for good basic training in science in schools is through the *Geophysics for Teachers* course being prepared by Adrian Noetzli

for the 2015 Conference. At the time of writing this piece we only had two registrants and about ten presenters, but we hope that situation will change before this piece is printed.

On the tertiary education front, many of us feel that there are too many graduates who can run computer programs without an adequate understanding of how the input data was acquired and how the data is being manipulated. Perhaps university administrators are so cowed by Occupational Health and Safety considerations that they no longer can allow students out of the safety of their 'nurseries'. One of the goals for the ASEG in 2015 is to create a course in data acquisition for geologists and geophysicists so that they can understand the pitfalls and errors that can creep into the data during acquisition.

I think that the ASEG website should also be a vehicle for education. Unfortunately we have yet to advance into the modern era on this front. Carina Kemp has done a great job on ensuring that the website actually works and Katherine McKenna has fixed the Members' database so that we can easily pay our dues, buy our wine and access publications. But, that is only the start. I see the future of the website as being the repository of our journals, historical material, workshops proceedings and presentation videos. It is probably too soon attempt this because some of the necessary software is in its infancy and is expensive. I am sure that will change and we will have greater access to all material in the future through various Apps or other means. What we need is a team of younger professionals who want to take this vision forward. Come and talk to me or other Federal Executive members at the conference if you have ideas you would like to implement.

Once again, a great thank you to the Conference Organising Committee. I know, only too well, how much work goes into a conference. The committee has been hard at it and I am sure that, as in previous years, it will be a great meeting.

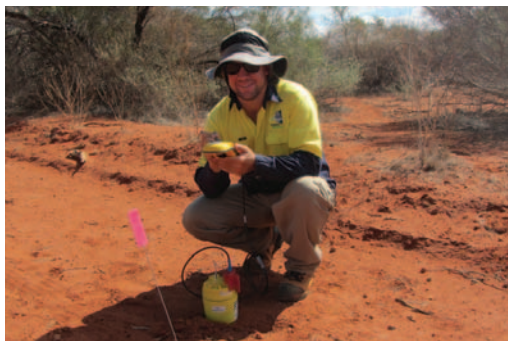
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## Welcome to new members

The ASEG extends a warm welcome to new Members approved by the Federal Executive at it's December meeting (see table).

| First name | Last name  | Organisation  | State | Country   | Membership type |
|------------|------------|---|-------|-----------|-----------------|
| Adel       | Vatandoost | FMGL  | WA    | Australia | Active          |
| Rod        | Lawrence   | SMEC Australia  | NSW   | Australia | Active          |
| Kent       | Inverarity | SA Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources | SA    | Australia | Active          |
| Wu         | Wen        | Chinalco Rio Tinto Exploration Pty Ltd                    |       | China     | Active O/S      |
| Lee        | Horn       | Schlumberger Australia                                    | WA    | Australia | Active          |
| Cameron    | Johnston   | MAGSPEC Airborne Surveys Pty Ltd                          | WA    | Australia | Active          |
| Peter      | Spencer    | MAGSPEC Airborne Surveys Pty Ltd                          | WA    | Australia | Active          |
| Xiajing    | Ma         | CGG   | WA    | Australia | Active          |
| Tom        | Brooks     | Woodside  | WA    | Australia | Active          |
| Alan       | King       |   |       | Canada    | Active O/S      |
| Vince      | Rodych     | INOVA Geophysical   |       | Canada    | Active O/S      |
| Rob        | Ross       | Qatar Petroleum   | WA    | Australia | Active          |
| Rebecca    | Lowndes    | University of Melbourne                                   | VIC   | Australia | Student         |
| Ry         | Zawadzki   | Curtin University   | WA    | Australia | Student         |
| Mitchell   | Ryan       | University of Queensland                                  | QLD   | Australia | Student         |
| Alban      | Haisley    | University of Queensland                                  | QLD   | Australia | Student         |
| Daniel     | Handerson  | Indonesian Geophysics Student Association                 |       | Indonesia | Student O/S     |
| Md         | Kajol      | University of Camerino                                    | MC    | Italy     | Student O/S     |
| Nyakno     | Jonah      | University of Calabar                                     | CRS   | Nigeria   | Student O/S     |
| Dane       | O'Shea     | University of Queensland                                  | QLD   | Australia | Student         |
| Matthew    | Mayne      | Wireline Services Group                                   | WA    | Australia | Corporate       |



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## Notice of Annual General Meeting

The 2015 Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Australian Society of Exploration Geophysicists (ASEG) will be held in Sydney on Wednesday 15 April 2015. The meeting will be hosted by the NSW Branch at the Rugby Club (<http://www.rugbyclub.com.au/>). The address is: Rugby Place, Off Pitt Street, Sydney, NSW 2000.

Drinks will be available from 5.30 pm and the meeting will begin at 6.00 pm.

The business of the AGM is:

- To confirm the minutes of the 2014 AGM;
- To receive from the Federal Executive reports on the activities of the Society during the last preceding financial year;
- To receive and consider the financial accounts and audit reports that are required to be submitted to Members pursuant to the Society's Constitution and to law;
- To report the ballot results for the election of the new office holders for the Federal Executive;
- To confirm the appointment of auditors for the 2015 financial year.

The AGM will be followed by a scientific presentation. The speaker and title will be announced closer to the event.

### Invitation for candidates for the Federal Executive

Members of the Federal Executive serve in an honorary capacity. They are all

volunteers and Members are encouraged to consider volunteering for a position on the Executive or on one of its committees. Current members of the Federal Executive are listed in *Preview*; please contact one of them if you wish to know more about volunteering for your society.

The Federal Executive comprises up to 12 members, and includes the following four elected members:

- (i) President,
- (ii) President Elect,
- (iii) Secretary, and
- (iv) Treasurer.

These officers are elected annually by a general ballot of Members. Phil Schmidt was elected as President Elect in 2014 and as such will stand for the position of President in 2015.

Members wishing to nominate for one of these positions should note that in accordance with Article 8.2 of the ASEG Constitution '...The elected members of the Federal Executive are designated as Directors of the Society for the purposes of the [Corporations] Act.'

The following officers are also recognised in the Society's Constitution and serve on the Federal Executive:

- (i) Vice President,
- (ii) the Immediate Past President (unless otherwise a member of the Federal Executive),
- (iii) the Chairman of the Publications Committee,

- (iv) the Chairman of the Membership Committee,
- (v) the Chairman of the State Branch Committees, and
- (vi) up to three others to be determined by the Federal Executive.

These officers are appointed by the Federal Executive from the volunteers wishing to serve the Society.

Nominations for all positions (except Past President) are very welcome. Please forward the name of the nominated candidate and the position nominating for, along with the names of two Members who are eligible to vote (as Proposers), to the Secretary:

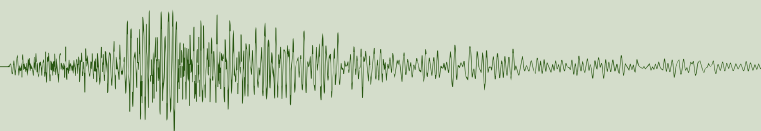
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Nominations must be received via post, fax or email **no later than COB Wednesday 18 March 2015**. Positions for which there are multiple nominations will then be determined by a ballot of Members and results declared at the Annual General Meeting. Proxy forms and further details of the meeting will be sent to Members prior to the meeting by email and made available to Members on the Society's website.



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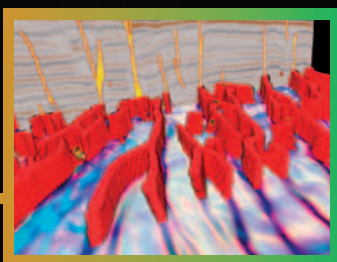
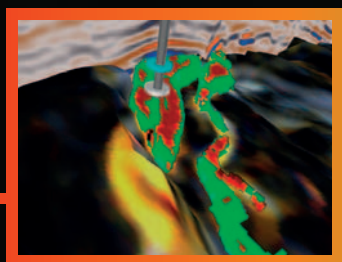
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### ASEG News

#### South Australia & Northern Territory

The SA&NT Branch of the ASEG wound up 2014 with our Annual Christmas Party at the Coopers Alehouse – we celebrated the festive season in style!

The local branch held a number of successful industry events in 2014 with numerous local, interstate and overseas guest speakers, as well as a number of social events. We'd like to thank all of our sponsors for 2014, including Beach Energy, the SA Department of State Development, Geokinetics, Ikon Science, Minotaur Exploration, Petrosys, Santos, Schlumberger, Statoil and Zonge. We hope to have them all back in 2015, with a few new faces too.

The first event for 2015 will be the AGM, to be held in March, once everyone is back from ASEG-PESA 2015 in Perth. We welcome any interested members to the local committee and any commitment, large or small, is appreciated. Please get in touch for more details.

We are also pleased to announce that the Australian Society of Exploration Geophysicists 25th Geophysical Conference and Exhibition, to be co-hosted by PESA, will be held at the Adelaide Convention Centre, 21–24 August 2016. Having grown from a relatively low-key event, first held in the AMF Centre in Adelaide in 1979, to be the premier exploration geophysical conference in the southern hemisphere, it is appropriate that the theme: *Interpreting the Past, Discovering the Future* is reflective of our society's members' ability to change, innovate and grow through time.

As ever, new members and other interested persons are always welcome to local events, as well as the committees for both the local branch and the Conference.

For further details, please contact Luke at [luke.gardiner@beachenergy.com.au](mailto:luke.gardiner@beachenergy.com.au) or 8338 2833.

*Luke Gardiner (SA&NT Branch President)*

#### Tasmania

An invitation to attend Tasmanian Branch meetings is extended to all ASEG Members and interested parties. Meetings are usually held in the CODES Conference Room, University of Tasmania, Hobart.

Meeting notices, details about venues and relevant contact details can be found on the Tasmanian Branch page on the ASEG website.

*Mark Duffett (Tasmanian Branch President)*

#### Victoria

Victorian Branch Meetings are usually held at The Kelvin Club, 24–30 Melbourne Place, Melbourne. An invitation to attend these meetings is extended to all ASEG Members and interested parties. Meeting notices, details about venues and relevant contact details can be found on the Victorian Branch page on the ASEG website

We look forward to seeing many ASEG Victoria Branch members at meetings in the coming months.

*Ashjorn Norlund Christensen (Victorian Branch President)*

#### Western Australia

The WA Branch culminated another busy year with its Christmas Party and AGM on 3 December. At the AGM we officially elected Kathlene Oliver as President and David Farquhar-Smith as Secretary. Both Kathlene and David, who took over their respective roles in the second half of 2014, look forward to fulfilling the duties of their positions throughout 2015.

The WA Branch held 10 Tech Nights during 2014 with over 500 attendees. In addition, we hosted a number of travelling speakers and workshops. These included one SEG Distinguished Lecturer (Dave Hale), two SEG Honorary Lecturers (Sandeep Chandola and Koichi Hayashi), one SEG DISC presented by Shawn Maxwell, and two OzSTEP workshops presented by Mike Astin and Brian Minty. We've also had the opportunity to host several technical events jointly with the IAG, IAH, EAGE and PESA, all of which were resounding successes.

Maintaining our high level of activity would not have been possible without the help of sponsors. Thank you to all of our generous 2014 sponsors: Schlumberger, GPX Surveys, UTS Surveys, GLOBE Caritas, Geotech, Geosoft, CSIRO, Skytem, Intrepid Geophysics, First Quantum and Mira Geoscience.

Looking to 2015, the Tech Night calendar is taking shape and we're also planning

to hold two one-day workshops as well as the Junior Geophysicist's Forum. We are also hosting the ASEG-PESA conference in February and hosting a joint conference with AIH and SPE on tight and shale gas in June.

This year the WA Branch provided financial support to well-deserving geophysics students in WA. The ASEG WA Award program is now in its second year. Congratulations go to Ben Witten (UWA) who was the recipient of the ASEG WA Award for 2014. Thank you to the Awards Committee members Todd Mojesky, Antonio Huizi, Kathlene Oliver and John Joseph for all their efforts in deciding on the deserving recipient. Also congratulations to our best presenter for this year's student night - Matthew Kovacevic (Curtin University). We look forward to watching both of these gentlemen's careers progress within our geophysical community.

We would like to thank the WA Branch committee for all their hard work and dedication throughout 2014, so thanks to Heather Carey, Brett Harris, John Joseph, Kristian Madaschi, Matt Blomfield, Garrett Kramer, Mohammad Khoshnavaz, Regis Neroni and Antonio Huizi. Also thank you to the outgoing President, Anne Tomlinson, for her hard work and dedication to the local branch. The WA Branch is excited about the events planned for 2015 and we look forward to seeing large numbers of our members at these events.

*Kathlene Oliver (WA Branch President)*

#### Australian Capital Territory

ASEG ACT Branch had a very busy 2014, with everything from world leading science talks to quiz nights and social outings. Thank you to all our members for helping support our organisation.

In January 2015 many of our ASEG members who work at Geoscience Australia are leading workshops for the National Youth Science Forum for Australia's top Year 11 science students. Geoscience Australia's education centre, staffed by trained educators, hosts the National Youth Science Forum each year. During the two half-day sessions students will be running a small seismic refraction survey, a ground magnetic survey, and undertaking water sampling and core analysis. The workshops provide students with a hands-on experience and the

opportunity to engage with leading scientists and to learn about some of the major geoscience challenges facing Australia. For more information about NYSF go to <http://www.nysf.edu.au/>.

There is a lot happening in 2015: the ASEG-PESA 2015 Geophysics and Geology together for Discovery Conference in Perth, the ACT local branch AGM (March 2015), two ASEG student scholarships to be awarded, and the best geophysics lectures and workshops - as well as quite a few social events!

I take this opportunity to thank the local ACT Branch 2014 committee for their hard work: Ray Tracey, Ned Stolz, Carina Kemp, Eva Papp and Bill Jones. A particular shout out to our very busy office bearers Millicent Crowe – Secretary, Ross Costelloe – Treasurer and Marina Costelloe – President. We hope to see you at the Geoscience Australia booth at the ASEG-PESA conference!

*Marina Costelloe (ACT Branch President)*

## New South Wales

In **November**, Jason Errey from OEMG-Global gave a talk on a cost benefit analysis of Aquares Resistivity sub-bottom profiling surveys. Jason spoke about the use of geophysics in civil engineering projects and went through a number of case histories, both marine and land, outlining the speed and benefits of the aqua-marine resistivity system. Much discussion followed.

In **December**, Rosemary Hegarty from the Geological Survey of New South Wales gave us a talk on the geophysical activities of the Geological Survey. Rosemary spoke about how the GSNSW aims to improve geophysical data and increase its use. Rosemary also spoke about current activities including the collaborative Southern Thomson Orogen Project (AEM, gravity and MT, between Cobar and the Qld border), and interpretation accompanying the East Riverina regional mapping (Ardlethan area).

An invitation to attend NSW Branch meetings is extended to interstate and international visitors who happen to be in town at that time. Meetings are generally held on the third Wednesday of each month from 5:30 pm at the Rugby Club in the Sydney CBD. Meeting notices, addresses and relevant contact details can be found at the NSW Branch page on the ASEG website.

*Mark Lackie (NSW Branch President)*

## Queensland

We invite anyone who is visiting Brisbane to attend meetings of the ASEG QLD Branch and we are currently looking for speakers for 2015. Meeting notices, information about venues and relevant contact details can be found on the QLD Branch page on the ASEG website.

*Fiona Duncan (QLD Branch President)*



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