

President's Report

Firstly, I'd like to thank my predecessor, Dr Tony Armstrong, who has done an excellent job of running the Division for the year and a half prior to the commencement of my term.

I'd also like to thank the Secretary, Rob Gehling, and the Treasurer, Craig Boulton, for the considerable work that they've been putting in to the Institution over the years. Both do this "behind the scenes" and my guess is that most members are not aware of all the time that they put into the Institution.

And, I'd like to thank the Council members, many of whom have been particularly active this year in supporting Division activities.

Future Initiatives

In addition to the many activities that Dr Armstrong undertook as President last year, we are particularly indebted to his establishment of a list of future activities for the Division. I'm very pleased to say that the Council has further developed this list, and more importantly has started to recognise leaders for the various initiatives. These initiatives broadly fall into the following five categories:

1. Engagement with relevant maritime bodies in Australia;
2. Engagement with academic institutions and professional bodies in Australia;
3. Involvement in major maritime conferences/events/activities in Australia;
4. Boost/support section activities; and
5. Other.

The first of these initiatives includes submissions to enquiries, and we are currently working on the next submission for the Senate's Enquiry into the Future of Australia's Naval Shipbuilding. This is a follow up to the Senate's enquiry in the last Parliament, which lapsed when the election was called. The Enquiry has been re-constituted with new terms of reference.

Important initiatives in the "other" category include: ensuring that the website is up to date; and pathways to CEng for CASG. The Vice President, Jesse Millar, is leading the CEng pathways for CASG, and is also taking an active role in assisting with CEng pathways in general on behalf of the Institution.

Engineers Australia

I'm pleased to report that the Joint Board with Engineers Australia has been re-activated, under the Chairmanship of Jim Black (a past President of the Division), supported by the Secretary. In addition to other developments, this has resulted in an agreement whereby the Division is treated by Engineers Australia as one of its technical societies and can therefore make use of Engineers Australia facilities *etc* for Section Technical Meetings. We have also been able to make use of the Engineers Australia facilities in Perth for a Council Meeting.

In recent months there has been communication regarding Engineers Australia's review of its competency requirements and rationalisation of Continuous Professional Development delivery, to which we have either replied, or have distributed as appropriate. We have also

been specifically included in Engineers Australia's distribution of notices for the forthcoming DST-EA lectures.

Victorian register of engineers

Members may be aware that the Victorian Government is proposing to introduce registration for engineers which may be implemented in 2018 with a three year transition. We are grateful to Craig Boulton who represented the Institution at the initial meeting to discuss this. The Division subsequently made a submission to the Victorian Government in relation to their proposal, based on our experience with registration in Queensland.

Defence White Paper

An interesting development last year was the publication of a new Defence White Paper. In this it refers to the generation of a Centre for Defence Industry Capability, and a Defence Innovation Hub. These could be potentially interesting developments and I hope that the Institution will be able to contribute to them. We've written to the Defence Minister asking for further information and offering to assist.

Australian Maritime Innovation Centre

Another interesting initiative that has been developing during the year is the proposed formation of the Australian Maritime Innovation Centre, which is being led by Professor Ian Young, AO, from the University of Melbourne.

This certainly meets the Institution's objective to:

"Encourage and promote the carrying out of experiments and other enquiries intended to assist the advancement of knowledge in the science, technology and management of shipbuilding, marine technology and shipping"

Hence, we have offered our support to this exciting new initiative, and Karl Slater is attending meetings on behalf of the Institution.

Sections

One of the most important aspects of the Institution is the Section Technical Meetings. Of course, these are run by the Section Committees, but it is the job of the Division to support these Committees as best it can. To this end I'm trying to visit as many Sections as possible. I've already been to Technical Meetings in: ACT; NSW; Tasmania; and Victoria, and of course have met with Section Committee members at each of these.

These have been very interesting, and I've enjoyed them all. It has also been great meeting with Section Committee members, and others, at these gatherings. I am struck by how differently the various sections operate, and run their technical meetings. Of course there is no reason why they should all be the same – whatever suits that particular Section. It is also interesting to compare the way the Sections are run here in Australia, with my recent experiences at the Southern Joint Branch in the UK, and the UAE Branch.

I hope to meet as many in the WA Section Committee as possible in conjunction with the AOG. I'm also eager to attend the Queensland and South Australia/Northern Territory Sections as soon as I can.

During 2016 ACT held five Section Technical Meetings; NSW held nine; South Australia/Northern Territory held one; Tasmania held three; Victoria held six; and Western Australia held five. It is interesting to see that the arrangements for each of these Section Technical Meetings are different, and have been tailored to suit the particular needs of that Section. In some cases the Technical Meetings are formal joint meetings with the IMarEST, and in other cases there are more informal arrangements, including those with the Nautical Institute. I also note that the NSW Section makes use of the Engineers Australia venue, as part of the arrangements that we have with EA.

I would urge all Sections to keep their web-pages up-to-date to maximise use of the information and improve the public image of the Division. Please direct to the Secretary any queries regarding updating.

Awards and Prizes

One of my most pleasurable tasks as President is to present the Division prizes.

I'm pleased to say that I was able to present the Division prize at the University of New South Wales for the best ship design project which was shared equally between Alex Walter and Alistair Smith. Both Alex and Alistair also won the David Carment Memorial Prize and Medal for the best overall project. Alistair is the son of Warren Smith, a well-known Fellow of the institution who also received the David Carment Memorial Prize and Medal when he graduated in 1981. I think that this is a bit of a unique "father and son" occasion, and it was great that Warren was able to attend the presentation.

I was also able to present the Walter Atkinson Award to Shaun Denehy from AMC, who was the lead author for the paper which won the Walter Atkinson Award. I was pleased to be able to present him with the award at the SMIX bash.

Matthew Trump was awarded the prize for the best research project by a final year student, at AMC, and Tobias Aldridge won the Tasmanian Section's prize for the best presentation.

I'm very pleased to say that Dr Stuart Cannon (a past President of the Australian Division) has recently been elected as a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering. This is a very prestigious recognition for all the good work in the field that Stuart has carried out over the years, and we congratulate him on this fantastic achievement. Recognition by the Academy of the work that Stuart has accomplished also raises the profile of the profession, and in particular of RINA, nationally.

Conferences

International Maritime Conference (Pacific)

The last IMC was very successful, and the Division benefitted financially from this, very largely due to the efforts put in to it by John Jeremy, and his team, including Adrian Broadbent, who chairs the Programme Committee.

The next IMC is currently being planned. This will be held in Sydney 3-5 October 2017. I hope that as many members as possible will attend this, and the accompanying exhibition, which is usually very interesting.

Australasian Oil and Gas Conference and Exhibition

The Australasian Oil and Gas Conference and Exhibition is held every year in Perth, and thanks to the efforts of the WA Section, and Yuriy Drobyshevski in particular, the Institution is a partner. The event last year was very successful and this year we've taken the opportunity to hold our AGM in conjunction with this, which is on the 22-24 February.

If you were not able to make it in 2017 I hope that you'll be able to attend in 2018.

Australian Naval Architect

Yet again we have had four bumper issues of *The Australian Naval Architect* throughout the year. This is often cited as being one of the most valuable features of membership of the Australian Division, and we are incredibly indebted to the editors: John Jeremy; and Phil Helmore. I know that they put a fantastic effort into each edition, and this is greatly appreciated by the membership.

Fortunately, due to the circulation of the *ANA* to most members electronically and in colour, and the success that our advertising manager, Jesse Millar has had in attracting adverts for this, the cost of the *ANA* to the Division is minimal. I'd like to thank Jesse for the effort that he puts into ensuring that we have sufficient advertising, and to the advertisers for continuing to support the journal.

I'd also to encourage all members to consider advertising in the *ANA*, and/or for them to persuade their employers and clients to do so. The journal is very widely read throughout the Australian maritime industry, and advertising in it is particularly good value.

Survey of Members

In order to find out what members think of the Division activities, and what aspects of membership are most important to them, it has been decided to circulate a questionnaire to all members.

This is being arranged by the Vice President, Jesse Millar, and should be circulated to all members shortly. Please do try to find the time to complete this, as it will influence the future directions taken by the Division.

Naval Architecture at UNSW

Members may be aware that UNSW, which has been running a very highly regarded Naval Architecture program for a number of years, has decided that it can no longer support courses with small student numbers. Consequently, it has made the decision to suspend this program. This is potentially a serious blow to the profession in Australia, and we've written to the Dean to urge him to re-consider.

Unfortunately, it seems that this is a decision that has been made by the University for all the courses with small student numbers. I guess that this is a reflection of the importance of financial considerations to universities, rather than doing the best thing for the community at large.

We've also written to the Ministers for: Education & Training; Defence Industry; and Defence. To date we have not had a response from any of these ministers.

I know that many in the industry are lobbying the University to attempt to persuade it to change its decision, and we are following this with interest. Of course, if there is anything that the Division can do to support this course then we will certainly be considering that.

Financial Position

I am very pleased to say that the Division remains in a strong financial position. However, although we do have adequate reserves in case of emergencies, it is important to note that our annual grant generally barely covers our expenses, as I'm sure the Treasurer will comment on in his report.

I'd like to thank the Treasurer, Craig Boulton, for his ongoing extensive efforts in managing our finances. This is no mean task, and I am aware of the effort that he puts into this.

Concluding Remarks

I'm pleased to say that the Division is, on the whole, in a very good shape.

We're making quite a bit of progress with the various strategic initiatives that we've identified, and it's great that a number of members are offering to take leadership roles with many of these.

The two conferences that we've been involved with are both going very well, again thanks to the many members who put in a lot of effort for these.

We have some very active Sections, but there are some which aren't perhaps as active as they could be. I know that these Sections are working on increasing their activities for next year.

And the Division remains in a strong financial position.

Martin Renilson
President,
Australian Division,
Royal Institution of Naval Architects.