

President's Report 2017

It is my great pleasure to report on another year of successful activity and engagement.

Membership

In 2017, we experienced a net gain of 13 new members to take our total membership to 143 organisations. Significantly, with the membership of Transport Canberra and City Services, we now have every State and Territory transport and/or roads agency represented at our table.

I would like to acknowledge our other new members for 2017:

Allroad Group, Decmil, DM Roads, Everything Infrastructure Group, Georgiou Group, Hatch, Holcim, LEK Consulting, MI Engineers, Netflow, Office of Projects Victoria, Q Free, Seed Engineering, Seymour Whyte and TSA Management.

Policy Achievement

Through our unique 'policy partnership' model, we were again able to deliver high-level strategic input on a range of policy issues and themes, including –

- reform of the public construction procurement process,
- congestion management,
- building a customer approach to transport and strategic road maintenance,
- capacity and skills,
- harmonisation of pavement marking specifications, road safety barrier installation training and accreditation, traffic management and road asset data, and
- sustainable cities of the future.

We have broadened member and stakeholder involvement in a number of our Chapters. The Journey Reliability Chapter now has its own Reference Group to provide expert input on specific policy issues, while the Transport Reform Reference Group has launched into four project groups, each assigned a priority task on which to develop a policy response.

One of our major areas of policy focus is connected and automated vehicles – specifically, ensuring we have a consistent, national regulatory response to the roll-out of CAVs. In April, we led a delegation of senior government and industry leaders on a study visit to Europe and the United States to better understand how the technology and regulatory environments are evolving overseas. Out of this visit we produced a major report, Preparing for the Driverless Revolution, that was sent to every road and transport minister and every member company CEO across Australia to provide essential context for the task of putting CAVs on our roads.

Services to Members

This year RA has organised and hosted 89 events across the country, approximately half of which have been free to our members. These free events, which include our unique single-table events and all our policy workshops, underscore the value members derive from our event program.

Our major industry events - the two-day Summit in Sydney and our one-day Forums in Perth, Melbourne and Brisbane - were again well supported, while our John Shaw Award Dinner broke all records with over 700 attendees. I might add that our Annual Lunch in Sydney today is also a record-breaker, with 400 in attendance.

Together with 35 members and staff, I have just returned from leading our Australian delegation to the World Roads Meeting in Delhi. We had a very successful conference and met with road industry leaders from around the globe to share and absorb experiences and best-practice.

We continued to broaden our event base in 2017. Our Young Professionals program, designed as a networking and information sharing platform for the under 35s, was successfully launched in Melbourne. We subsequently held events in Brisbane, Perth and Sydney, including our inaugural YP annual dinner and award presentation in Sydney earlier this month, which brought together over 220 young professionals.

I would like to thank Arup for its sponsorship of this program, which is ultimately about nurturing our own to ensure the next generation of industry leaders come through our ranks.

Likewise, our RA Fellowship Program has continued to flourish. Since its inception three years ago, nearly 80 young leaders have been through this industry-first mentoring program, with a fresh intake of 30 coming onboard in 2018. The Fellows are now driving their own success, with the program overseen by a Council of Fellows supported by RA staff. John Holland Group has sponsored this program since the beginning, and we thank them for their tremendous support.

Our website and newsletter continue to keep the industry well informed – the newsletter's distribution recently passed a staggering 11,000 subscribers. We again thank Cardno for its ongoing sponsorship and support of the Insider.

Gender diversity and corporate responsibility

In 2017, RA has play a proactive role in the promotion of workplace diversity, forming a Diversity Committee and running 11 events that have had gender diversity, social inclusion and/or social procurement as their core theme.

We have also worked closely with CareerSeekers, a not-for-profit that helps place skilled refugees and asylum seekers in internships. I'm proud to say that through our combined efforts, 40 refugees and asylum seekers have to date found placements with RA members.

Our initiative to provide complimentary seats to RA industry lunches for maternity and paternity-takers was very well supported and appreciated as a means of maintaining contact with the industry and colleagues.

Acknowledgments

I want to publicly acknowledge all our member organisations that sponsored or supported our program in 2017, led by our Patron Sponsors - Advisian, Altus Traffic, Arcadis, Arup, Aurecon, Cardno, Coffey, John Holland and SMEC.

Other event sponsors and supporters included Transurban, GHD, pitt&sherry, Laing O'Rourke, the SA Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure, Decmil, Golder Associates, BMD Constructions, Seymour Whyte, WSP, Liberty OneSteel, Lendlease, Fulton Hogan, Engineers Australia, Opus, Queensland Transport and Main Roads, Beca, Downer, Jacobs, Kapsch, AECOM, ACRS, Clayton Utz, WT Partnership and Ashurst.

The John Shaw Medal is our industry's highest accolade, and this year Bruce Judd's name was added to the illustrious roll call.

A more recent but none the less prestigious accolade is the RA Technical Excellence Award, the 2017 winner of which will be announced at today's lunch. Last year's winner was a very worthy John Hilton.

I want to thank all Board members for their dedicated service throughout the year, and in particular our Chapter Chairs - Clare Gardiner-Barnes, Greg Steele, Marko Misko and Scott Olsen. They were ably supported by Deputy Chairs Michele Huey, Steve Cooley, Jay Stricker and Dan Reeve.

Our staff has worked tirelessly to deliver this enormous program of events and activities in 2017. On your behalf, I thank our Chief Executive Ian Webb, and his team of Lauren Streifer, Mandi Mees, Mark Bowmer, Rachael Rooney, Hannah Sauvarin, Thao Nguyen, Veronica Ong, and our two newest staff members, Alex Stott and Marlie Curtis.

Finally, I want to thank our members for their great support. Our strength and influence is a direct reflection of the broad support we enjoy right across our membership base.

I know I speak on behalf of all Board members when I say it is a privilege and a pleasure to serve you.