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A note from the Chairman Paul Coker

Greetings to all. It's hard to believe that winter has arrived. Half the year is past and it may seem that not too much has been achieved, but much has taken place. Your newsletter is coming to you in a new format. In this way we shall be able to keep in contact with you more often and give you a means to give us your thoughts on issues that are

concerning you. Your executive believes that the time is right to host the next CMT conference in QLD (2010).

Your new executive continues to meet with meetings well attended. Many thanks to those who have volunteered their time in this way. I would like to extend my thanks to Peter Davis for the long hours he put in as an Executive Member and Newsletter Editor.

Several laboratories have taken advantage of the Association's reference sieves to calibrate their own working sieves. In ways like this your Association is able to assist its members in practical ways.

Perhaps you have a similar idea where AGTA can be of assistance to its members.

May I take this opportunity to wish everyone the very best for the rest of 2009 and look forward to catching up with you through our Newsletters or at our Members' Forums.

Paul Coker
CHAIRMAN

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:***STOP PRESS: CMT 2010 CONFERENCE BRISBANE***

At its July meeting the AGTA committee resolved to host a national conference for the Construction Materials Testing Industry.

The meeting resolved to hold the conference in Brisbane in mid September 2010 over 2½ days. We are holding discussions with MRD QLD which has an event organization capability. They have indi-

cated willingness to be a major sponsor.

We are seeking expressions of interest from individuals and organizations for;

•

Forming a steering committee of 4-5 members to liaise with the event organizers.

•

Presenting a paper.

•

Sponsoring the event.

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Mounting a trade display.

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Please contact: Chairman Paul Coker, Deputy Chairman Mark Owtrim and Secretary Alan Bartlett.

•

Your support and feedback will be greatly appreciated.

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<i>The views expressed by contributors do not necessarily reflect AGTA policy</i>	



TRAINING CORNER

Continuous improvement of the Laboratory Operations Training Package

Manufacturing Skills Australia, the national peak body representing the skilling needs of all sectors of the laboratory industries is currently conducting a review of the Laboratory Training Package as part of its continuous improvement process.

A major component of this work is to develop new and improve existing competency units relevant to the construction materials and geotechnical industries.

I was privileged to be member of a workshop that met in May to advise the consultant conducting the review.

Other members were from the private sector and Main Roads. Similar workshops have been conducted in other states.

New competency units to be added include:

<i>Conduct laboratory-based acceptance tests for construction materials</i>	<i>Soil classification tests, gradings, aggregate shape, concrete strength</i>
<i>Conduct field-based acceptance tests for construction materials</i>	<i>Field densities of soils and asphalt, heat of neutralisation; slump, yield, air content of concrete</i>
<i>Perform tests to determine the properties of construction materials</i>	<i>CBR, stability and flow of asphalt, MDRs, UCS</i>
<i>Undertake in situ monitoring of construction materials and structures</i>	<i>Inclinometers, piezometers, load cells, strain meters, profilometer</i>
<i>Assist with geotechnical site investigations</i>	<i>Relevelled as assisting</i>
<i>Conduct geotechnical site investigations</i>	<i>Previously Assist with geotechnical site investigations – leader of a small team</i>
<i>Supervise geotechnical site investigations</i>	<i>Responsible for major investigation projects</i>
<i>Review results and issue reports</i>	<i>Significant input from NATA – describes role and responsibilities of a signatory</i>
<i>Perform regular calibration checks on equipment</i>	<i>Complying with NATA FADs, eg. Sieve checks, thermometer ice point, etc.</i>

Existing units to be improved include:

<i>Assist with fieldwork</i>	<i>Less emphasis on environmental fieldwork and</i>
<i>Supervise earthworks inspection, sampling and testing operations</i>	<i>Renamed and respecified to allow inclusion of supervision of concrete and asphalt and quarry</i>
<i>Perform microscopic examination</i>	<i>Respecified for application to petrography, miner-</i>

In addition, the rules for defining qualifications (Packaging Rules) will be changed to allow more units to be imported from other training packages where relevant.

Qualification titles will now be able to show a specialization eg. Certificate III in Laboratory Skills (specializing in Construction Materials Testing) or Certificate IV in Laboratory Techniques (specialising in Geotechnical Testing).

The updated training package is expected to become available in the second half of this year.

For further information or to comment please contact Alan Bartlett (alan@abconsulting.edu.au or 0419 732 851)



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From New Scientist magazine 22nd July 2009

Working from a sunlounger

THE powers that be at Guy Robinson's place of work insist that employees tell the office if they're "working from home". Human laziness being what it is - sorry, we meant to say "the employees being committed to maximising productivity in a forward-looking sense" - the welter of emails on Monday mornings got shortened to the three letters "WFH". Then someone was stuck working at an airport and sent the message "WFA".

Then, given the insistence by the virus that is language on mutating whenever possible, the changes poured in and escaped the limitations of the alphabet: "WFT" working on a train, "WF__" working from a sunlounger (not being smug or anything) and "WF_O_/" working from a plane (ditto).

Guy's colleagues suggest "WF#" for "working from prison", but they have not needed to use this, yet. Feedback suggests a few others: "WF=====" for working at a linear accelerator and "WF() - (-)" for working in a laser lab (with lenses).

Now the phenomenon just needs a sciency name. It has to be "ergotopography", from the Greek words for "work", "place" and "writing". Do readers have more examples - preferably those captured in the wild, as it were?



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Policy Circular #26 - Requirements for supervision of Construction Materials Testing facilities

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ASSOCIATION OF
GEOTECHNICAL
TESTING AUTHORITIES
(QLD) INC

By now most of you will probably have seen this new NATA policy that will significantly alter NATA's approach to personnel who endorse test results. A quick perusal of Policy Circulars 21 to 25 will confirm that CMT has not been singled out for this treatment with other fields of testing having similar conditions applied.

Essentially the enterprise will be required to delegate authority to the signatory to endorse certificates. The delegate will be required to demonstrate their competence to do so through appropriate qualifications and/or experience. The level of experience and qualification will

depend on the level of supervision and complexity of the facility's operations.

The onus will be on the enterprise to ensure that signatory can satisfy these criteria at audit. Failure to do so can incur significant penalties for the enterprise with the possibility of being required to withdraw all certificates endorsed by the individual. This could incur loss of clientele and potential litigation.

A note of clarification: Certificate V is more correctly called Diploma and Certificate VI is the Advanced Diploma.

The policy circular can be downloaded at

<http://www.nata.asn.au/index.cfm?objectid=340A2B8A-13D4-B1F1-48F51A3EA118E137>

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