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A note from the Chairman Paul Coker



It only seems like yesterday that we were welcoming in the New Year. What recession? Most members seem to be as busy as ever. Since our last Newsletter, your Executive has taken the decision to host a Construction Materials Testing Conference in Brisbane in October 2010. A Subcommittee is almost formalised. At the Association's Annual Meeting in December, a briefing on the Conference will be given. To be held from Wednesday 27 October to Friday 29 October, a theme of Engaging the Future will be the thread running through the Conference. It was very

pleasing to see several members step up to offer assistance with the organization of the Conference. This Conference is a very important stepping-stone for our Association as we endeavor to promote the geotechnical industry as an industry itself and as a rewarding career path choice. Any offers of assistance or ideas will most certainly be welcome.

Recently I was able to represent AGTA at a workshop to review the current standing of the Queensland Department of Main Roads' proposed Laboratory Registration Scheme. MRD have put a lot of work into getting their Scheme right. Change is happening and we should not be afraid of it, but should be prepared to embrace it. By working together we can only make our industry stronger, more viable end worthwhile. Please pass on your comments or concerns to your Association so we may be able to represent you more fully.

Your Executive has continued to meet regularly through the year and my thanks are extended to those who have volunteered their time in this way.

The Association's reference sieves have been in heavy demand recently. This is one way that your Association is able to assist you in a practical way. Perhaps you have a similar idea where AGTA can be of assistance to its members?

As we approach the Annual General Meeting, I would like to thank those members of the executive who have been able to find the time amongst a continual busy schedule to carry out the Association's work.

To those who work within our industry, may you have a SAFE, HAPPY and HEALTHY Christmas. I look forward to seeing you at the AGM

PAUL COKER
CHAIRMAN

Test Sieves

In the last 12 months 10 labs have used our certified test sieves at a cost of \$100 (we pay freight) for each lab. Considering the cost of purchasing a set of sieves at approx \$1600 and if you have stored your sand samples from initial checking your 2nd year of checking will be easy. All my feedback on use of sieves has been good so if any of the other AGTA labs want to use this service let me know.

Ronnie Richards

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More than kilograms and metres! MSA Conference 2009

The Metrology Society of Australia held its eighth *biennial conference* from *Wednesday 30th September to Friday 2nd of October* this year. The venue was the *Surfair Hotel at Marcoola on the Sunshine Coast*. Local and interstate delegates involved in the calibration industry attended for 2½ days of papers, workshops, networking and conviviality. Partners and families of delegates were entertained with bus trips to offsite activities and attractions.

Principal Sponsor was Fluke, manufacturer of precision electronic instruments. NMI (National Measurement Institute) and NATA were partners.

The main topics covered included calibration techniques for electronic and physical measuring instruments, proficiency testing and measurement uncertainty. A significant announcement was that NMI is currently in the process of taking responsibility for trade measurement in the states and territories so that we will have a nationally consistent system. The various state instrumentalities for ensuring accuracy of shop weights and measures and fuel delivery systems will come under the auspices of NMI.

A highlight of the conference was the coverage of proceedings by Mr Tom Rudd ostensibly from Queensland Country Life news-

paper. Tom told us he was from Nobby, between Toowoomba and Warwick and that he was related to the Rudd's including Dad, Mum and Dave. Readers familiar with Australian literature might recognize the link to Arthur Hoey Davis. He also mentioned a s...tty nephew Kevin who had done well for himself. Tom was mas-

ter of ceremonies for the Thursday evening dinner.

More, ahem, mature readers will probably remember two attendees who are even more mature. Brian Phillips calibrated many a balance in many a CMT lab before his retirement. He was formerly an AGTA member and presented a talk on balance calibration and care to one of our general meetings. Good to see him lapping the pool in the early mornings before breakfast and still interested in MSA.

Another blast from the past was Barry Neville who used to calibrate force measuring instruments including compression machines, load cells and proving rings. Barry was employed by the University of Queensland from 1962 and I can remember him coming to Cania Dam in 1979 to calibrate the Denison compression machine. Funny, but so can Barry. In fact I would bet that Barry can remember every instrument he calibrated. Both Barry and Brian are quite active in retirement and volunteer for such activities as Meals on Wheels.

In conclusion, the conference was well run and the organizing committee are to be congratulated on a very successful event.



Sunrise at Marcoola Beach



Tom Rudd, MC at the conference dinner



CMT 2010

Engaging the Future

Planning for AGTA's initial conference (and the second national CMT conference) is well under way. We have had several meetings and the following details have been agreed upon:

Dates - 27 to 29th October 2010

Venue – Sebel and Citigate, corner Roma and Ann Streets, Brisbane

Organisational support from Technical Training Support, the training arm of MRD

Themes of the Conference

Technical Governance

CMT – the next Generation

Knowledge Sharing

Technology and Innovation

We will be asking members and interested parties for:

Papers relevant to the themes and CMT in General

Sponsorship to defray the cost to individual members and organisations

Trade displays of interest to members

Bright ideas from members on how to make this the best conference ever

Support from members by your attendance and encouraging non-members to attend

Encouragement for junior staff to attend.

It's your conference – let's make it happen

Used Testing Equipment

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*ALMA Laboratory Managers Conference 2009*

Feedback Report

Greg Broad and Mark

Hammond recently attended the SIA (Science Industry Association), incorporating ALMA (Australian Lab Managers Association) annual conference. The conference which was held in Melbourne this year provided an opportunity for lab managers to get together with fellow lab managers, suppliers and relevant experts in their field of knowledge, to learn and network for the betterment of the Laboratory and science industries.

The conference talks covered from OHS and environmental issues in laboratories to Laboratory design and functionality. There was a large representation of laboratory equipment and service providers to tempt the lab managers with their latest technology and wares. While the conference was about laboratory management generally, it was still very relevant to CMT laboratories and their management staff.

I don't think anyone at the conference will forget us (Alan Bartlett Consulting) in a hurry due to a wonderful theatrical performance on the night of the conference dinner, with a hilarious improvisation of Greg Broad's life, live on stage for all to enjoy (this was an abso-

lute crack up). It certainly took the pressure off everyone else in the room. The conference dinner was a pleasant way to network with the other attendees.

All in all we had a great time, learned a lot (might take a while to sink in though) and met some very interesting people from different labs including mainly Pathology, Mines and educational institutions, but many others. CMT labs were poorly represented, again and this tended to show from the speakers through to the supplier displays. We thought that the conference was valuable to CMT labs as much as other lab types. Thanks to everyone including the conference organisers, participants and of course ABC management for letting us attend. We hope that next years conference which will be in Brisbane will be as successful as this years Melbourne conference. Queensland CMT lab managers should consider going to the 2010 Brisbane conference.

You can never learn too much about the testing industry and most labs are not that different especially when it comes to general functions and issues. If people are interested in attending, I am sure we can

convince conference organisers to provide appropriate speakers and supplier displays.

Here is the contact info for SIA and ALMA and the next conference

[Duncan Jones](#)
Executive Director

[Science Industry Australia Inc. \(SIA\)](#) and,
[Australasian Laboratory Managers Association \(ALMA\)](#)

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Maybe we will see you at the 2010 conference in brissy.

Greg Broad and Mark
Hammond



Alan Bartlett Consulting

LABORATORY QUALIFICATIONS

Subsidised under the Enterprise Based Productivity Places Program

The Australian Government announced in November the Enterprise Based Productivity Places Program to provide up to 11000 new training places for existing workers. Qualifications eligible under the program include:

- Certificate III in Laboratory Skills
- Certificate IV in Laboratory Techniques
- Diploma of Laboratory Technology
- Advanced Diploma of Laboratory Operations.

Applications for places will be accepted only from the relevant enterprise or industry body. Alan Bartlett Consulting Pty Ltd is calling for expressions of interest from organisations wishing to apply for places under the program.

Under the program, the level of subsidy depends on the size of the enterprise so that the **maximum** we would charge successful applicants per participant would be according to the following table:

	Fewer than 100 employees	100 to 199 employees	More than 200 employees
Certificate III in Laboratory Skills	\$500	\$1250	\$2500
Certificate IV in Laboratory Techniques	\$500	\$1250	\$2500
Diploma of Laboratory Technology	\$1000	\$2500	\$5000
Advanced Diploma of Laboratory Operations.	\$1000	\$2500	\$5000

Eligibility requirements include: Australian Citizen OR Permanent Resident OR Humanitarian Refugee
 15 years or older
 Full-time, part-time or casual worker OR
 Self-employed



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Obituary

Paul Thompson

It is with deep regret that we mark Paul's passing on 18th August 2009.

Paul migrated from England with his family in 1957.

He had a career in the CMT industry beginning in 1972, working in both the public and private sectors. He was a long-standing advocate of AGTA and its predecessor the Construction Materials Focus Group. He held office as chairman and secretary between 1998 and 2002.

I first met Tommo when he joined us at QWRC Rocklea in 1975 where he was involved in soil testing and site investigation work. He left in 1981 to work for McWilliam and Partners as a field technician and driller before becoming laboratory manager in 1983.

In 1986 he was involved in the establishment of Queensland Geotechnical Services as Director and Laboratory Supervisor.

Paul was featured in People in Profile in the AGTA Newsletter No 11 of November 2000.

We at AGTA salute Paul's contribution to the Association and to the CMT industry.

Alan Bartlett



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