

SMIC NEWS

The 136th General Meeting of the Surveying & Mapping Industry Council of NSW was held on Friday 11 May 2012 at the RMS offices in Parramatta.

The Chairman and Deputy Chair gave the Council a report on their attendance at the inaugural meeting of the NSW Select Property Services Industry Reference Committee, which was chaired by SMIC Chairman and ISNSW representative Mark Gordon. The purpose of the Committee is to provide:

1. industry advice that ensures NSW bi-partite representation of the industry sectors in NSW;
2. NSW industry support for the structure and operation of the NSW ITAB project;
3. Independent and impartial industry advice that incorporates views of all aspects of the NSW industry and its sub-sectors, including small business and regions.

Membership of the Committee is for 2 years. Other organisations invited to participate include Building Services Contractors Association, NSW TAFE, United Voice (formerly the LHMU), Waste Management Association, Building Designers Association, Australian Environmental Pest Managers Association, Fire Protection Association and an RTO, the Lennox Institute.

The Chair and Deputy Chair attended a CPSISC (Construction & Property Services Industry Skills Council) "Skills Connect" Workshop on 18 May 2012. It provided an overview of the new Australian Government Skills Connect service and highlighted the available funding opportunities including the Workplace English Language & Literacy (WELL) program. The workshop concentrated on the foundation skills (LNN – Language, Literacy and Numeracy) training packages and the benefits of an articulated pathway from school to the VET Sector and on to higher learnings. The existence of the website www.constructmycareer.com.au was also highlighted.

TAFE representative Graeme Smith provided the Council with an update of actions intended in regard to TAFE funding. Increasingly, Commonwealth funding will depend on the States opening up their training market for funding. The Council believes that while this may be achievable for low cost and popular courses, there is a potential risk to "unpopular" courses that have a low level of enrolments and a high cost outlay per student (eg for the supply of technical equipment). The Council believes that this short-sighted endeavour will have a significant detrimental effect on the already critical skills shortage in Surveying. Indeed, the number of Institutes and RTOs offering Surveying may diminish. There is also a proposal that students who already have a Certificate III qualification and enrol in an additional course will be full-fee paying. Formal notification of the changes is expected by the time of the next SMIC meeting.

Veronica Bondarew reported on the ACS appearance before the Senate enquiry into engineering and related professions skills shortage, chaired by Liberal Senator Chris Black. ACS, through CSN, made four recommendations. The recommendations aimed to highlight the critical shortage that currently exists in the surveying industry and some possible improvements including additional targeted funding for universities teaching surveying subjects given their constraints due to their location within engineering budgets. The Senate committee asked for some additional information regarding figures for number of students enrolling, graduating and their entry numbers over the last 5 years. An additional question on notice referred to the number of registrations that have occurred over the last 5 years to support our discussion that in some states like WA the situation is not sustainable.

The following information should be of interest to members of our constituent organisations and the general public. Full reports by the representatives on SMIC can be obtained on request by e-mailing smic@smicnsw.org.au or by contacting the SMIC Chairman, Mark Gordon. Acronyms are explained on the SMIC website at www.smicnsw.org.au. Links to our member organisations are on the SMIC website.

- **ACS** –The ‘Surveying and Mapping Industry Day’ is scheduled for 5 September 2012 in Martin Place. Industry Day booths/marquees are available for hire. SMIC has reserved a marquee at the ‘Surveying and Mapping Industry Day’. The Transit of Venus project is on track for 6 June. The next BOSSI workshops will commence at the end of June and limited spaces are still available. The Regional Roadshow commences in June with Dr Lindsay Taylor speaking about the latest EPA updates. The ACS NSW State Conference will be held at NSW Parliament House on 8 June 2012.
- **GITA** – The 17th Annual Geospatial Solutions Conference (GITA 2012) is being held from 6 - 8 August 2012 at the Sofitel, Victoria, Australia.
- **ISNSW** – The first 2012 Maths in Surveying Day is fully booked out on 25 May, and the second event is on 10 August. There is talk of a third event on 16 November. The Excellence Awards are being held on 22 September 2012 at the Sofitel Sydney Wentworth. ISNSW is holding a photographic competition with first prize of 2 tickets to the Excellence Awards. The Cumberland Group’s Land Development Seminar is being held on 20 July 2012 at the Liverpool Catholic Club.
- **MSIA** – An organised tour of technological sites in Australian Technology Park at Eveleigh, will be held on Tuesday 29th May, 2012. This is a joint venture between SSSI, GITA and MSIA. Some of the sites on view will be the NSW government’s super server and cloud computing site (ac3), Taggle, Smartgrid and traffic management using the public’s cell phones etc. It will start at 4:00 pm and finish at 7:00 pm. The Mapping Sciences Institute’s Annual Seminar will again be held at the Aspire Hotel in Bulwarra St, Ultimo on 25 October, 2012.
- **Surveyor General** – It is anticipated that around 100 LPI CORS will be operational by the end of the calendar year. Comments on the remake of the SG Direction No 9 GNSS for Cadastral and Mining Surveying are due by 30 September 2012. LPI has released for comment internal procedures documenting the processes and policies for Cadastral Integrity Audit Surveys. More open selection criteria have been approved for the 2012 SG International Fellowship. Applicants must be a NSW resident, employed in the NSW Industry, have a project that requires overseas investigation and not have been awarded a SG Fellowship in the past. Applications close on 24 August 2012. ‘Maps that Shaped Australia’ has been published by LPI NSW: a complimentary online exhibition of some of the maps can be viewed at www.baseline.nsw.gov.au.
- **TAFE** – The opening of the VET market in Victoria (“enforced contestability”) has resulted in the TAFE marketshare plunging from 80% three years ago to 49% last year, with the removal of small enrolment courses, over 700 staff being made redundant and small regional TAFE colleges being closed. Similar changes, with similar results, are expected to be made in NSW over the next few years.
- **University of Newcastle** – There have been 34 acceptances for the Surveying degree and 11 for combined Surveying degrees. The ATAR is 71.55. 16 graduates completed their degrees at the end of 2011 and graduated in April, with Joshua Frost being awarded the University Medal. Interviews for the Professorship in Surveying were held in February. Dr Harvey Mitchell is planning to retire in late 2012. Hunter Manning Group members Tony Proust, Rachael Brown and Rock Muldoon gave a presentation to students on 5 April.
- **UNSW** – A very successful ‘Trends in Geospatial Technology – implications for Research’ seminar was held on 13 April 2012. The 3rd International Conference on Indoor Positioning and Indoor Navigation (IPIN’12) will be hosted by the UNSW School of Surveying and Spatial Information Systems from 13-15 November 2012, with participation from well-known companies such as Google, Nokia and Aeroscout. For more information, visit www.surveying.unsw.edu.au/ipin2012/.

The next SMIC meeting, being Annual General Meeting and the first general meeting of the new SMIC year, will be held on Friday 13 July 2012 at the Sydney Ports Corporation offices at Port Botany. Bess Moylan from the Illawarra TAFE Institute will join us to talk about the success of the Certificate III on-line course.

Mark T Gordon
Chairman