

AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY OF DEFENCE ENGINEERING (ASDE)
NEW SOUTH WALES CHAPTER
MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD 3rd MARCH 2011
AT RUSI LIBRARY 20th FLOOR DEFENCE PLAZA SYDNEY

The Meeting commenced at 1100 hours.

Apologies and Attendance

Attendees were John Brett (JB), John Elliott (JE), Tom Fink (TF), Doug Roser (DR) Chair and Chris Skinner (CS).

Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes of the last meeting were accepted.

Chairman's Report

The Chairman reported on the Engineers Australia Combined Engineering Practice Advisory Committee and Consultative Chairs Meeting held on 11th February 2011 and also on the ASDE National Committee Teleconference Meeting held on 15th February 2011.

- The current President has established a Council Committee to consider the form of the CPEng accreditation, its value to members/industry and the processes by which its award could be improved. At the EPAC meeting the need to also consider how a better integration of the various pathways of accreditation could be achieved was also raised.
- The February Engineers Australia has an article on national accreditation which is an ongoing objective of EA.
- The National Committee is considering the expansion of the ASDE Awards for Educational Excellence to a South Australia educational organisation.
- ASDE is actively involved in the Year of Humanitarian Engineering in all Chapters and the objective to ensure the role of the ADF in humanitarian engineering is given appropriate recognition is being achieved. The coverage of the ADF and ASDE in the February Engineers Australia was positive progress.
- The ASDE cooperation with the Submarine Institute of Australia for one day of a Conference in Adelaide to focus on the workforce required to design, build and support submarines was progressing well. See later report.
- Next year will the Year of the Regional Engineer.

Business Arising from Last Meeting not covered in Agenda

DMO/ASDE/EA Conference As reported at the last meeting, the Conference in Canberra last November was successful. The Chair advised that he had been approached by DMO to conduct a similar conference in Sydney with ASDE and EA

in August. The Conference would be in conjunction with a 3 day Conference being organised by the Systems & Software Quality Institute (SSQI) called Improving Systems and Software Engineering Conference to be held over 2-5 August. On one of the days it was suggested that ASDE/EA/DMO would arrange a similar program to that of Canberra and the next day would be restricted to DMO only, as was done in Canberra. The Chair advised that NSW ASDE and EA Sydney Division had agreed in principle to the proposed conference but this agreement was vetoed by the EA Canberra Director of Engineering Practice for reasons not identified. SSQI had since made contact to explore whether cooperation with ASDE NSW was still a possibility. The Chair would discuss this with the Director Sydney Division and make a decision.

Action: Chair to discuss with Director Sydney Division to decide level of cooperation for the proposed Conference.

Proliferation of Landmines Worldwide The meeting noted that no progress had been made in engaging the ADF or EA on the development of an engineering solution to the millions of unexploded mines throughout the world which are still killing or maiming locals of the areas. This problem had been raised by JB as a project which could be initiated in the YoHE. He advised that some study on solutions had been advised to him by a representative of a University of the YoHE Launch. The meeting agreed JB should follow up the issue with Universities. JE agreed to provide details of Jeff Spence who had also had an interest in this area.

Action: JB to follow up any study by Universities on a solution to unexploded mines. JE to provide contact details to JB.

Conference on Submarine Workforce CS reported that the Organising Committee for this event was in place and that Greg Marsh was representing ASDE. CS will be travelling to Adelaide in the near future and would be participating in further planning for the event. It is clearly understood that ASDE/EA will be involved only on the third day (10th November) which will focus on the workforce required to support the design, build, and support of submarines and similar technologies eg undersea mining operations.

Action: CS to participate in the further planning of the Conference and continue regular reports to ASDE and EA.

Naval Engineering Review The meeting noted that the National ASDE Committee had been unable to obtain any information on the status of this review and any follow up action. The meeting agreed it would be appropriate for the National Chair to write to the Chief of Navy seeking an update on the outcomes of the Review.

Action: Chair to seek agreement of National Committee to write to Chief of Navy.

NSW Chapter Participation in the Year of Humanitarian Engineering (YoHE)

The meeting noted that the role of the ADF in humanitarian engineering had been highlighted in the February Engineers Australia. The Chair reported that the ASDE Chapter had been successful in having the role of the Army in humanitarian engineering activities recognised in that Army was one of three short presentations given at the Sydney Division Launch of the YoHE and that the Division was now working with ASDE to have an Army event included in Engineering Week – Army was very supportive of this idea and had provided two officers to work with ASDE and EA to arrange the event. The presentation by Brigadier Budd on the RAE had also been well received. The Chair advised that as plans for an Army event in Engineering Week are further developed he will need additional support from ASDE Committee members.

Action: Chair to continue to work with the Army contacts and the organisers of Engineering Week to arrange an event involving Army and to continue to report to the Committee.

Event Program for 2011

The meeting noted that the presentation by Brigadier Budd on the Royal Australian Engineers on 7 February had been very successful particularly the presence of a course from the School of Military Engineering. The other events scheduled for 2011 are:

- 2 May – Technical Airworthiness in the ADF by Air Commodore Terry Saunder RAAF Director of Technical Airworthiness.
- 4 Jul – DSTO – Agreed subject to agreement of Chief Defence Scientist.
- 5 Sep – Industry – to be arranged.
- 7 Nov – Navy – to be arranged.

CS suggested the industry presentation should be on Cyber Warfare and agreed to identify SME companies working in this area who could be contacted by the Chair. CS also agreed to make arrangements for a presentation on a Navy related subject in November. The meeting also agreed that ASDE should try to arrange presentations with an engineering content. Later in the meeting discussion on the role of defence engineering identified that a presentation by Navy on the recently established Seaworthiness Board would be a very pertinent subject for the Navy presentation.

Action: CS to identify companies involved in Cyber Warfare and to arrange a Navy related presentation, preferably on the Seaworthiness Board.

The meeting also discussed the value of holding a Social Event such as a Reception or Dinner to which previous presenters, ADF engineers, industry and government

executives could be invited. One suggestion was to have Steve Gumley of DMO as a Speaker to explain the forward plans for DMO so ASDE could contribute to the constant debate on DMO' effectiveness.

Action: The Committee to further develop ideas for an Annual Social Event for members and special guests.

Treasurer's Report

The ASDE financial position is still sound.

National Newsletter

DR reported that the National ASDE Newsletter will follow the National ASDE Meetings of which the most recent was last month.

Dysfunction in Australia's Defence Acquisition Bureaucracy This item had been added at the suggestion of CS following the publishing of a Monograph by Air Commodore Ted Bushell (Retd) titled "An Analysis of Defence Materiel Organisation Major Projects Management and What Need to be Fixed" from Air Power Australia Analysis, an online journal. The meeting enjoyed a wide ranging discussion on the status of engineering in the ADF and the local defence industry, of which the most salient points were:

- It is important for engineers to be incorporated into the ADF as an understanding of the designs and operations of systems in the field is required to address problems while on operations without contractor support.
- Engineers must be embedded into the acquisition process to ensure smart purchasing driven by the users as well as contractors.
- The identification of some engineers as sustaining engineers as distinct from design engineers is not necessarily a valid differentiation.
- Modifications and modernisation of systems require engineering expertise.
- Engineers must operate in structure which allows them to give unadulterated engineering advice not influenced by corporate cultures or group think.
- Organisations must have a structure and processes in which engineering advice, in all of its many forms, cannot be suppressed by non-engineering managers.
- A National Registration System for engineers, a current initiative of the National Engineering Registration Board which includes Engineers Australia will give the EA chartered status more importance and the competencies it measures and continues to professionally develop. This needs to take account of ADF engineers.
- ASDE does not want to engage in any wholesale criticism of DMO – rather it should ensure any comment/debate on DMO is balanced.

At the conclusion of the discussion the meeting agreed that it considered that it was appropriate for ASDE to develop a position on the role of engineers in the ADF, the Department and defence industry and the competencies required by these engineers in their various roles. Furthermore the meeting identified the absolute need for

independent engineering advice to be available to all levels of the ADF, its supporting procurement processes, and the logistic support of the systems/equipment it uses. The Chair was asked to seek the agreement of the National Committee to consider the development of such a position by ASDE which it could then use to influence defence engineering in all of its forms and Engineers Australia.

Action: Chair to raise the need for ASDE to develop a position on the requirements of defence engineering to be used to influence the development and deployment of defence engineering.

Other Business

CS asked if the Navy Engineering Bulletin could be given distribution within ASDE and EA. DR advised that copies are sent to the Administrator which supports ASDE and that he would ask for wider distribution to be investigated.

Action: Chair to follow up wider distribution of Naval Engineering Bulletin with the ASDE Administrator.

Next Meeting

The Chair agreed to advise a date for the next meeting, soon after the next National Committee Meeting scheduled for 18th May 2011.

Action: Chair to advise date of next meeting.

The meeting closed at 1320 hours.

Doug Roser
Chairman
3rd March 2011