



National
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the Mapping
Sciences
Institute,
Australia

Inside:

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From the President

From the last newsletter members will have no doubt seen two opposing views on the future direction of MSIA. In his message as past president, John McCormack supported the continuation of MSIA as a separate body but working in close cooperation with the Spatial Sciences Institute. In my position paper as incoming President-Elect I set out my views that supported MSIA moving to become fully unified and integrated with SSI within the spirit of the original "Spatial Sciences Coalition" put forward in 2002-2003 following the industry action agenda.

I still stand by those views and in taking on the role as National President at the AGM held in Melbourne on 19 May I reiterated to those present the major objectives that I set out in my position paper.

In May 2004 the Chairman of Executive, Ron Furness,

submitted to Council for consideration a draft SLA/ MOU between MSIA and SSI that he had prepared in conjunction with Graeme Wright. Accompanying this was a detailed covering letter to all Councillors in which Ron put forward his views on the future direction of MSIA and the decisions needed to be made by Council. Amongst these were the following observations:

"I see very little MSIA-oriented activity or delivery of members services.."

"I see very little MSIA-oriented activity or delivery of members services whatsoever around our Divisions although there is some, but at its best, patchy."

"Around the States (or as SSI prefers, Regions) I note the coming into existence of some



fully-fledged SSI Regions (eg Western Australia, South Australia) and I note the varying levels of engagement around Australia of the MSIA Divisions with the SSI and the fledging Cartography Commission "

"My own 'reading of the MSIA tea leaves' is that most of our Divisions are on the brink of 'wrapping up' their operations. I know of little, if any, future-oriented activities or member service delivery planned or going on in the Divisions other than fee collection or the occasional planned seminar. ... my overall point is

A Need for Change ? - The Future of MSIA

by Adam Ladhams
Email: avladhams@hotmail.com



Preamble

This discussion provides support for the continuation of the MSIA and offers an assessment of the MSIA as it current-

ly stands. The views contained within are based on a professional and personal perspective, attributed through involvement in the industry and with MSIA. The discussion seeks to incite constructive and crucial debate from the membership. The MSIA must now forge ahead with member's interests in mind.

The SSI Approach

There is continued discussion as to the validity and extent to which the MSIA membership intended to support the amalgamation of the five peak professional bodies in the

"The discussion seeks to incite constructive and crucial debate from the membership"

spatial industry. Back in 2003, members were sent a Questionnaire and later, a Prospectus requesting their response to the formation of the SSI. The response was that a majority (of a minority that voted) of MSIA members expressed an interest in the

that MSIA is decreasingly, it seems, able to service the commitment it makes to its members when it collects their fees”

Through subsequent reports to Council, including what has come out of the recent Council Meeting in Melbourne on 20 May, I believe that most of the above observations still hold true.

In putting forward the case that MSIA should continue John cites the low percentage of MSIA members that have joined SSI since the original 2003 vote. What needs to be also assessed is how many of those MSIA members who have chosen not to join SSI have in fact continued on as financial members of MSIA. This is an action coming out of the recent Council Meeting held in Melbourne on 20 May. With the recent introduction of centralised collection of subscriptions at the national level, which I believe is a positive step, the assessment of current financial status of members should be able to be carried out more effectively.

In my view a contributing factor to members not joining SSI and possibly not renewing their MSIA membership is the lack of clear direction by National Executive and Council on the whole SSI issue which has prevailed since 2003. I outlined my concerns at this lack of direction and progress in my position paper in the last newsletter.

As the Past President indicated there have been two attempts made with the SSI to create a MOU that would bring the two organisations closer together. The initial SLA/MOU document as developed by R Furness and G Wright in May 2004 did go part of the way towards moving our organisation forward in this direction however stopped short of committing MSIA to final unification with SSI. This proposal was put to Council but never presented to SSI for further discussion.

The second MOU contained many of the common elements of the previous one but included the proposal for the two tiered level of membership within MSIA that was recommended in the “Moving the MSIA Forward” action plan following the October 2004 National Council meeting. Under this arrangement it was recommended there would be a basic level of membership provided by MSIA for those members opting to pay a lower fee, and an enhanced level for those members opting to pay the higher SSI compatible fee rate. For those members opting for the enhanced category, it was anticipated that they would receive the full service from SSI.

This second document was forwarded to SSI, however members need to be aware that this was rejected by the SSI Board earlier in 2005 on the basis that the two tiered membership proposal as outlined above was inconsistent

with the more inclusive and egalitarian approach that SSI has adopted. This proposal also lacked a clear commitment of the strategic intent for MSIA to move towards full unification with SSI.

Certainly unification is the aim of SSI, however there have been reservations held by National Council of MSIA on making this commitment and from the outcome of the most recent National Council Meeting in Melbourne this still appears to be the case.

In rejecting the above proposal the SSI placed their own proposal “on the table” for consideration. This was discussed at the recent Council Meeting and it was agreed that with some modifications it could be further reviewed. This has been left as an action item for the President and one other Councillor to pursue. The disadvantage of not reaching an agreement with SSI is that for those MSIA members who have retained their MSIA membership as well as joining SSI they continue to face having to pay two subscriptions. This is a situation I would like to resolve.

Despite this lack of a common agreement between the two organisations, SSI have recently agreed that all MSIA members wishing to register for the forthcoming SSC 2005 Conference in September can do so at SSI member rates. I commend this conference to MSIA members and details on the conference are included elsewhere in this newsletter. This is the second biennial national conference put on by SSI and these will no doubt continue to meet the needs of the spatial science professionals. The last national conference organised by MSIA was in Melbourne in 2002 and I doubt whether it will have the capacity to mount another in the future. Again, this is a primary reason for my pushing for full unification with SSI.

MSIA members have been previously made aware that the window of opportunity to secure Foundation Membership of SSI closed on 30 June 2005. As MSIA has not put in place any SLA/MOU with SSI prior to this date, then if in future such an agreement is made, all memberships under the agreement will be ordinary rather than Foundation memberships. Foundation members of SSI will enjoy a lifetime waiver on all application fees associated with any future Professional Certification.

As National President I cannot change the future direction of MSIA unilaterally and must abide by the wishes of the majority of National Council. We will continue to explore options of moving forward towards some of the goals I originally outlined, however I must express my disappointment that the majority of Councillors and Executive do not share these goals at this stage.

Peter Shaw
National President
FMSIA, FSSI

CONFERENCES

SYDNEY

August 15 - 17
GITA 2005 Conference
imsevent@bigpond.net.au

MELBOURNE

September 12 - 16
SSI Conference
ssc2005@ausconvservices.com.au

AUCKLAND

November 17 - 19
IMTA Asia Pacific Conference
imtaaspac@chariot.net.au

WOLLONGONG - SYDNEY

July 13 - 17, 2006
CoastGIS 06
rfurness@ozemail.com.au

DARWIN

August 2006
MSIA Seminar
"400 Years of Mapping Australia"
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Two teams of SSI and MSIA committees have a boat race. On the big day the MSIA win by a mile and the discouraged SSI's hire a consulting firm to investigate the problem.

The findings are that the MSIA team had eight people rowing and one person steering while the SSI team had one rower and eight people steering.

Based on these results, the SSI team is completely reorganized to include four steering managers, four steering area managers and a new performance review system for the person rowing the boat to provide work incentive.

The following year the MSIA win again, so the SSI lay off the rower for poor performance and give the manager a bonus for discovering the problem.

*"It is not the strongest of the species
that survive, nor the most intelligent,
but the ones most responsive
to change"*

- **Charles Darwin**

*"Better to remain silent and be
thought a fool than to speak out
and remove all doubt"*

- **Abraham Lincoln**

ANOTHER GRIMM FAIRYTALE



1. Once upon a time there were two organisations, one long standing and the other a newly established one. The problem that arose was that the newish one was endeavouring to take over the old one. Some of the methods this newish organisation employed, however, were somewhat dreamlandish in their application.

This I shall explain as follows.....

(a) Fairytale No.1

I quote from MSIA Newsletter No.14 - April 2005.....

“Survey / vote conducted in March 2003 amongst members of the five founding bodies of the Spatial Sciences Coalition indicated that of those from these organisations who voted, the majority were in agreement that steps should be taken to combine these respective institutions into the one body.”

“Although the outcome of this vote was not binding upon the founding institutions, it was nevertheless a clear indication from their membership that they wished to proceed with unification.”

Fact

Legal advice obtained stated....

“Exercise conducted on behalf of the then SSC, was merely a survey”.

The prospectus equated to a survey of interested persons.

“Of those persons who voted, more supported the proposal than were against it. It did not mean that Mapping Sciences supported the establishment of the SSI. Each institution itself, should conduct a formal voting process for the members entitled to vote.”

(b) Fairytale No.2

I again quote from Newsletter No 14

“Steps should be taken to combine these respective institutions into the one body.”

“Steps would be taken towards a merger over a transition period.”

“Lack of clear direction by MSIA on any proposed moves to merge with SSI”.

“preparation of a report” “Proposed Unification of MSIA / SSI”

Fact

Legal advice obtained stated....

“You cannot move the membership – membership cannot be transferred to a new body”.

“You cannot “merge” the MSIA – MSIA cannot become part of the SSI.”

“Joining SSI has to be an individual decision for each and every member.”

These fairytales were also evident in Jim Connolly's email of 2nd May 2005.

So be it.

2. This next point raised will not be called a fairytale because, in my opinion, it is a rather disturbing issue. I refer to the proposal of the Memorandum of Understanding.

What are the SSI proposing in their words *“a more inclusive and egalitarian approach”*

I believe the SSI are endeavouring to implement a total take over. Every member of MSIA will be subject to the provisions of this MOU, which involves also being subject to the fees involved i.e. approx \$300 for full member status.

How many full members of MSIA will stay at this price ?

What will the SSI gain with this venture if it gains approval ?.... I would guess almost nil members, only whatever is left in kitty.

Briefly, the foregoing is my line of thinking, and I have seen no evidence to date to think otherwise.

I would, however, also like to present the following observations as previously provided by our legal adviser

Directors

Under the Corporations Law.....

Directors have a duty to avoid a conflict of duty and interest.

If a Director of MSIA is closely aligned with the SSI and he reaches a decision as a Director of MSIA which is influenced by his relationship with SSI, that Director may be in breach of that duty and be personally liable.

Under the Trade Practices Act

Section 45A prohibits competitors fixing or maintaining prices for goods or services.

This section requires the two parties to be competitors, and it is certainly arguable that MSIA and SSI are competitors.

The services that each supply are the rights which attach to the membership of those organisations.

If there is a degree of collusion between the two organisations which results in the fixing of a price, then the section may have application. There are strict penalties which apply.

As Jim Connolly also said in his email of May 2005.... *“Food for Thought”*

Alan Armitage

Hon Nat Treasurer

MSIA.

8th July 2005

“Joining SSI has to be an individual decision for each and every member”

“Directors have a duty to avoid a conflict of duty and interest”

“If a Director of MSIA is closely aligned with the SSI and he reaches a decision as a Director of MSIA which is influenced by his relationship with SSI... may be in breach of that duty and be personally liable”

formation of the SSI. Based on the somewhat insubstantial 'vote', the SSI was formed and two years later, support in the greater industry has waned with the announcement earlier this year that the IEMSA will continue to operate, separate to the SSI.

Due to the inactivity by the MSIA of late, membership numbers to the MSIA have diminished. The SSI has picked up very few former or existing MSIA members (to date 12% of MSIA current or former members have joined the SSI). The lack of movement to the SSI is in spite of MSIA members being provided with ample opportunity and paraphernalia encouraging, almost at the neglect of the MSIA, to join the SSI. This year after the re-evaluation of the membership fees, membership to MSIA has rebounded from the previous year.

The 'all or none' attitude of the SSI towards the instant absorption of the MSIA membership is the wrong approach and greater consideration by the SSI should be applied. The reluctance of MSIA members to join the SSI is based on the concept of value for money and pure economics – SSI fees are far greater than that of the MSIA.

The need for MSIA to review fees annually is paramount, however, these fees must be in accordance with either the tangible or perceived benefits to members. Members have indicated through their cheque books that a fee of \$198 is undesirable. Like it or not, SSI fees compared to SSI are too inhibitive to joining SSI. In any case, all attempts to develop an MOU with the SSI have failed – that is not to say that MSIA has failed, but the process and the other party involved are notionally responsible.

The MSIA Approach

I believe that the MSIA has made a without prejudice attempt to form an alliance and partnership with the SSI. Through a Service Agreement, the MSIA would continue to operate and an enhanced membership would require the services of the SSI for a particular fee. The ISA for instance has informally acknowledged that the formation of the SSI needs to be treated with some regard and the ISA exists in some form for members that have not opted to move to the SSI and in case the SSI discontinues in the near future for any reason. The "Moving the MSIA Forward" is a step in the right direction. This philosophy is developed upon developing and maintaining friendships internally, seek member satisfaction pertaining to current provision of services, recognise the professional contributions by those in the sector and certification of these contributions.

Members can currently opt to do one of the following:

- ú Remain as a member and pay annual fees;
- ú Join another professional organisation, however with the expectation transfer of

membership is not possible and if the member wants to remain as a member of MSIA, continue to pay fees; or

- ú Discontinue their membership (resign).

Members who make a conscious decision to remain with MSIA should have their membership supported and any concerns of having their membership transferred be allayed.

To Be or Not to Be

The future existence of MSIA should be based on two important and resounding aspects:

1. Respectable Membership Levels.
2. Financial Viability.

As long as the above two elements are in cohesion, MSIA should continue to operate. In what capacity MSIA operates is open to further discussion, however could incorporate professional networking, the inception of knowledge and comprehensive provision of seminars and workshops.

The caretaker mode inherited by the uncertainty surrounding the future direction of MSIA at National level has all but subsided. The SA Division announced that they would cease to exist at the end of 2004. With the exception of the finances, membership services have been assumed by the National Executive and it appears that is working positively. This National service is available due to the support provided by volunteers, for without such assistance MSIA would cease to exist. With diminishing membership numbers across most industry sectors and the poor outlook for more volunteers, the MSIA may discontinue through lack of want to continue.

Future Outlook

Rome was not built in a day, however it only took a short epoch for it to come crumbling down. Unlikely as it may be at this point that the walls should come tumbling down, it must be stated that members of MSIA have not clambered to join another professional institution (ie SSI). Creating networks, alliances and partnership – whatever you like to name it – with other similar organisations is important for the greater industry. MSIA has their own identity, however involvement with members of other professional bodies can reduce the silo, independent approach. The stalling of any interaction with the SSI should not sour the efforts on other fronts. Co-existence in the industry can and will occur to the benefit of all concerned. Greater participation at events, the sharing of ideas and the utilising of skills between organisations would be direct indicators that the 'union' is working. Yes, MSIA should continue to operate for the betterment of the industry and it's members.

“The ‘all or none’ attitude of the SSI towards the instant absorption of the MSIA membership is the wrong approach”

On British Bureaucracy Railroad Gauge

The US Standard railroad gauge (distance between the rails) is 4 feet, 8.5 inches. That's an exceedingly odd number.

Why was that gauge used? Because that's the way they built them in England, and the US railroads were built by English expatriates.

Why did the English people build them like that? Because the first rail lines were built by the same people who built the pre-railroad tramways, and that's the gauge they used.

Why did "they" use that gauge then? Because the people who built the tramways used the same jigs and tools that they used for building wagons, which used that wheel spacing.

Why did the wagons use that odd wheel spacing? Well, if they tried to use any other spacing the wagons would break on some of the old, long distance roads, because that's the spacing of the old wheel ruts.

So who built these old rutted roads? The first long distance roads in Europe were built by Imperial Rome for the benefit of their Legions. The roads have been used ever since.



And the ruts? The initial ruts, which everyone else had to match for fear of destroying their wagons, were first made by Roman war chariots. Since the chariots were made for or by Imperial Rome they were all alike in the matter of wheel spacing.

Thus, we have the answer to the original question: The United States standard railroad gauge of 4 feet, 8.5 inches derives from the original specification for an Imperial Roman army war chariot. Specs and Bureaucracies live forever. So, the next time you are handed a specification and wonder what horse's ass came up with it, you may be exactly right. Because the Imperial Roman chariots were made to be just wide enough to accommodate the back ends of two war horses.

“The first long distance roads in Europe were built by Imperial Rome for the benefit of their Legions.”

“. . . arguably the world's most advanced transportation system was determined by the width of a horse's ass !”

Now the twist to the story. There's an interesting extension of the story about railroad gauge and horses' behinds. When we see a Space Shuttle sitting on the launch pad, there are two big booster rockets attached to the sides of the main fuel tank. These are the solid rocket boosters, (SRBs).

The SRBs are made by Thiokol at a factory in Utah. The engineers who designed the SRBs might have preferred to make them a bit fatter, but the SRBs had to be shipped by train from the factory to the launch site. The railroad line to the factory runs through a tunnel in the mountains. The SRBs had to fit through that tunnel. The tunnel is slightly wider than a railroad track, and the railroad track is about as wide as two horses' behinds.

So a major design feature of what is arguably the world's most advanced transportation system was determined by the width of a horse's ass !

MSIA Seminar Four Hundred Years of Mapping Australia

Planning for the seminar in Darwin is progressing well. A good number of abstracts of papers have been received and interest in the seminar is growing. There is still room for a couple more papers so members with an interest in aspects of Australia's cartographic history and heritage are most welcome to contribute.

It was hoped that the seminar would be held when the replica of the vessel Duyfken was due to visit Darwin during its commemorative circumnavigation of Australia in 2006. Regrettably this now seems unlikely, as the Duyfken Replica Foundation has not been able to raise the funds required to undertake such a voyage. It seems a pity that the replica, which is currently anchored in the Swan River near Perth City, will not be partaking in national activities to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the original Duyfken's contact with Australia in 1606.

Despite the setback with the Duyfken the seminar will still be held in August or early September 2006 at the latest. Arrangements are now being finalised and promotional material will soon be distributed. .

Plan to be in Darwin in August 2006 to celebrate 400 years of mapping Australia. Contact Trevor Menzies at menzies2@bigpond.net.au or telephone 041 889 2897 for information

ABC News Online Thursday, June 9, 2005.

First map to name America sells for \$US1 million

A 500-year-old world map that was the first to name a newfound continent west of Europe "America" was sold for \$US1 million at an auction in London. Charles Frodshan, a London book and manuscript dealer, bought the map for 545,600 pounds (811,852 euros) during bidding at Christie's, an AFP reporter said.

Christie's said the map was also the first printed portrayal of the Earth as a globe, the first that distinguishes North and South America individually, and the first depiction of a Pacific Ocean, it said. Printed in 1507 by the German geographer Martin Waldseemuller, the map is just one of four in existence and had been expected to fetch between 500,000 and 800,000 pounds.

The document, which is the centrepiece of a sale of maps, atlases and globes by Christie's, was discovered in February 2003 after a European collector realised that it was one of the maps in his collection. *"This is one of the most exciting discoveries of my career, and represents the pinnacle in the history of map making,"* Tom Lamb said, director of the auction house's book and manuscript department, in a statement.

"This simple sheet of paper holds so many new and anticipated discoveries, all created with an enormous leap of faith by a venerable geographer in a small town in Lorraine (eastern France)," he said.

Most history documents credit the Genoa-born explorer, Christopher Columbus, with being the first European to discover the so-called New World of North and South America in 1492, but he was convinced it was part of Asia. A second Italian, Amerigo Vespucci, actually argued that the landmass to the west of Europe was a whole new continent.

Until the map's publication, the layout of the world had been based on the knowledge of the ancient Greeks. But in 1505, Rene II, the Duke of Lorraine ordered a group of scholars led by Waldseemuller to draft a new world map. He gave them a French translation of Vespucci's travels and as a result, the scholars decided to name the new landmass "America" after the traveller's first name.

The first example of Waldseemuller's original map was discovered in 1871 and is kept at the University of Minnesota in the United States. The other two are in Germany. A fifth, much larger version, printed eight years later, was purchased by the Library of Congress in Washington for \$US10 million in 2003.

- AFP

New Fellows

Congratulations to William Cartwright - Hon. Fellow and John McCormack - Fellow on their newly attained status.

Mapping Sciences Institute, Australia

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www.mappingsciences.org.au

“The mapping sciences are those disciplines that deal with the acquisition, management and communication of geospatial information.

The Mapping Sciences Institute, Australia promotes the theory, practice and understanding of all facets of the mapping sciences through the collegiate strength and expertise of its members”.

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National Journal

The journal “SPATIAL SCIENCE” is published biannually, in cooperation with the Spatial Sciences Institute. The Editor-in-Chief is Dr. Graeme Wright [WA].

National Newsletter

The “MAPPING SCIENCES NATIONAL” is a newsletter published on an *ad hoc* basis. – Editor, Greg Heron [NT]. Alan Unkles [QLD]

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