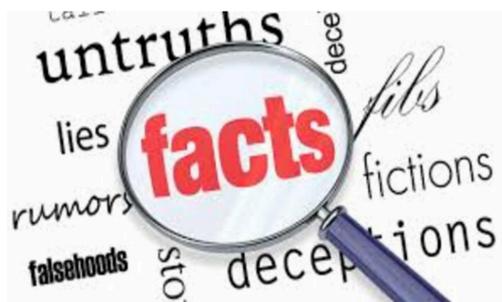


FACT SHEET



WIA Achievements 2016

WIA Board meetings are generally held by teleconference using the GoTo Meeting application. Following each AGM, there is a face-to-face meeting.

The WIA Board met on 19 occasions during the year and had many issues to consider and discuss. Some agenda items had to be carried over several times. Late in 2016, it was decided that, because agendas were often crowded, a number of matters were best dealt with electronically with voting via email, leaving more time at the GoToMeeting teleconferences. As a result, these meetings have returned to a monthly timetable. Below are some, but not all, of the matters handled during the year.

Policy Review

Policies in place for three years are reviewed by the Board. When a Committee was involved, that policy was referred for consultation on its relevancy and, where needed, updating. One policy was introduced “WIA Storage”, and one revised “WIA Archive Collection”.

It was decided that “Club Advertising” should go to the Publications Committee for consultation, and the draft Volunteer Charter was sent to volunteers for their comments and then to the general membership.

The process also considered any area where a new policy was identified as being needed, such as a “Consultation Policy”. In the interests of transparency, each policy is being uploaded to the WIA website alongside other WIA policy and regulation documents for the guidance of all.

STEM Initiative

The WIA conducted a symposium in Canberra on November 19th, seeking input to Amateur Radio involvement in STEM activities. The outcome of this successful symposium was a draft “way forward” plan, a network of STEM interested persons, and another event being planned for 2017.

The one-day Canberra event had 24 people attend to discuss seven presentations and a further 12 papers of suggestions, ideas and concepts. It confirmed that the target audience where activities would have greatest impact was at the secondary school level of Years 7 to 10, which were designed to dovetail with, or complement, the school curriculum. STEM is on the WIA 2017 AGM program for further discussion and progress planning.

Update to reciprocal licensing

ACMA negotiations and a public comment process saw a re-setting of the reciprocal licence table. Working with the ACMA, the WIA Board actively participated in the restructure of the

reciprocal licence requirements for US Amateur licence holders. Over time, overseas licence requirements vary and this opportunity allowed a realignment of US Technician licence levels to meet Australian standards.

QSL Bureau Operations

The inwards QSL Bureau has seen a substantial increase in incoming cards, and a more efficient card distribution system has been introduced to improve efficiency. Volunteers have assisted in sorting and distribution of cards. Consultation with the QSL Bureau Managers is planned to make the service uniform.

ANZAC 100 cards are being processed and dispatched as information is available. The electronic eQSL process initiated by the WIA for the ANZAC cards worked well. However, the WIA has noted that large numbers of radio amateurs are seeking physical QSL cards and not using the eQSL system.

ACMA Spectra Licensing Database

Some teething problems were experienced by the ACMA with their new Spectra Licence database. This resulted in the available callsign database on the WIA website being temporarily suspended by the WIA on three occasions while ACMA resolved the issues causing the problem.

WIA Exam Service

The WIA Exam Service continues to operate within the parameters specified by the ACMA. During 2016, there were 1179 assessments and 1146 callsign recommendations.

Membership Levels

The falling WIA membership was of concern during the year, attributed to adverse publicity on social media and elsewhere, and natural attrition as older members became SK. The greatest decline was in the first half of the year, while the rate of decline slowed during the second half. The WIA Board had the situation under frequent watch, considering how it could respond to the situation. The back of the membership renewal notice was revised and now shows the many services and other things done by the WIA in its Advocacy, Education and Support roles. Discussion was also held on the design and trialling of a coupon system giving free limited access to membership services by new licence holders; this will be trialled in 2017. Processing of membership renewals twice a month, instead of monthly, was introduced to provide a longer notice period to members.

Foundation Licence Manual

“Your Entry Into Amateur Radio” the Foundation Licence Manual, used mainly by those studying for their Foundation Licence, was fully upgraded and the “Third Edition” published in April 2016. This project involved a team of three volunteers who took responsibility for arranging its advertising, book editing, and coordination with the WIA’s graphic designer. Sales over the first two months moved the book into profit.

Club Insurance

The WIA Office undertook processing of the Club Insurance system for the first time in 2016, where it was previously coordinated by a volunteer. Although some difficulties were encountered in obtaining the required Club membership information by the due date, these were overcome and the public liability insurance for Affiliated Clubs was implemented completed in April.

AR Magazine and Callbook

Production of *Amateur Radio* magazine and the Callbook are managed by the Publications Committee, with support from the WIA office and Directors. *Amateur Radio* magazine continues to be published 11 times a year. The “digital edition” of the magazine, for online download by members, was launched in 2014, which has continued with every issue. Each monthly edition typically receives around 800 downloads. Subsequently, the Board has encouraged members happy to receive the digital edition only to drop their mailed delivery of the print edition. At time of writing 210 members have opted to only receive the digital edition, the WIA is aware that many members highly value the print edition.

The 2017 Callbook was also produced during late 2016 and published in December. This time, rather than providing a CD with the book, the Publications Committee opted to produce a digital version available for free download for those who purchase the Callbook through the WIA Website online bookshop delivering the purchaser a password protected link to download the PDF copy.

One-Shot Publication

A one-shot publication that grew from the ANZAC Centenary, called *Wireless Men & Women At War*, was launched for pre-sales in November, a discounted price being offered through to January 2017. This promotion achieved 100 paid orders by the time it closed. In the meantime, design and production continued for the book to be sent for printing in early 2017. At this time (mid February 2017) the book is undergoing a final review by the publications committee and is about to be printed.

Communication Improved

The year has had an increase in communication through the website news releases, the broadcast, in *Amateur Radio* magazine, the Board Newsletters and periodic emails to members via the Memnet membership database. Many clubs also pick up the various news feed. Major news items are now appearing on social media, especially Twitter and Facebook.

Technology and the FAQ

Improvements have been made to the MEMNET system which records membership and processes membership renewals. In discussions with the ACMA, changes were agreed to streamline the application of licenses, particularly for repeaters and beacons. To further ease the communication pressure on the office, the series of frequently asked questions (FAQ) on the website were revised.

AGM on Norfolk Island

The WIA AGM on Norfolk Island was a great success. Attendee numbers were about the same as AGMs in previous years. Those attending reported that the facilities, locations and program offered were excellent. Some members have indicated that they will return to Norfolk Island for further visits. As DX station was set up on the island, and the DX was reported to be “fine”. The UHF repeater provided by the WIA – VK9RNI – was a great success. Live video streaming of the AGM and Forum provided an opportunity for a wider audience across Australia to view proceedings. Live streaming is planned to be implemented for future AGM meetings. Planning for the 2017 AGM at Hahndorf followed, with the program details all but finalised before the year’s end.

Director Training

Six WIA Directors undertook training courses with the Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD); one completing a course through his membership of another organisation. The training included a variety of modules suited for the Directors of modern not-for-profit companies. Each Director agreed that the training was timely and worthwhile.

Future Licence Conditions

Further groundwork was done over the year on the pending review of the Amateur Service Licence Conditions. A substantial submission to the ACMA on future Amateur licence conditions was prepared ahead of a key meeting between the WIA and ACMA in April, which canvassed what the WIA could do in preparation for a review expected in 2017. Further meetings and discussions followed throughout the year.

The WIA is advocating “freeing-up” licence conditions for all grades, to encourage and enable development and adoption of emerging technologies over coming years and to make Amateur Radio more attractive to newcomers, especially young people. Topics covered in the licence conditions submission included frequency bands, transmission modes and permitted powers across Foundation, Standard and Advanced. The submission can be downloaded from the WIA website.

Spectrum Review and proposed new Radiocommunications Act

In April, the WIA submitted a comprehensive response to the government’s consultation paper on legislative proposals for a new Radiocommunications Act. In addition, the WIA lodged a submission in October in response to the ACMA’s consultation on its proposed update of the Australian Radiofrequency Spectrum Plan, which commenced on 1 January 2017. These submissions can be downloaded from the WIA website.