

AUSTRALIAN REPRESENTATIVE VISIT TO BCI TEAM IN THE UK August 2009

Over the last twelve months a number of issues and/or questions have arisen in Australia concerning BCI activities. Although some of these have been raised with the UK through normal email and telephone communications, the visit to the UK by the Australian Representative presented a major opportunity to review each one in detail with the appropriate BCI personnel. The following topics were covered:

- The examination and certification process;
- The proposed Continued Professional Development Program (CPD);
- The revised governance arrangements;
- The range of workshops provided in the UK and how such activities could benefit Australian members;
- Delivery of training courses;
- The Australian standard and local response;
- Proposed Australian activities over the next year or so.

The visit which occupied a full day was most productive in addressing the foregoing list and, importantly, in strengthening relationships with the UK Team. A key unforeseen outcome was recognition of areas in which the Australian Chapter may usefully contribute specific knowledge – e.g. in areas such as Pandemic Planning. It was also of immense value to develop an awareness of activities underway within the UK office.

In terms of the specific items listed, where particular outcomes have been agreed these are:

- Exam and certification. This has at last been addressed and the organisation now managing the process appears to be doing so competently. The computer-based exam can be sat in Sydney or Melbourne at this stage – additional locations may become available if demand is there. A paper-based examination is also available at the conclusion of some training courses. Successful resolution has taken some time, but now we can move forward.
- The introduction of a CPD is well supported and is appropriate for any discipline that wishes to be recognised a truly professional body. The proposed program now being piloted is generally fit for purpose, but the Australian view is that it does not sufficiently recognise the disparity between PD opportunities in the UK versus those currently available in Australia and other remote locations. The concerns were discussed and followed up in a formal document. One immediate positive outcome is recognition that obtaining and studying the reports from the UK workshops can be counted – this should be formalised.
- The revised governance arrangements are good from a business perspective – appropriate business skills must reside in a Board of Directors, not just discipline knowledge as has tended to be the case to date. The Australian concern (possibly shared by other countries) is ensuring that both the Board and the Membership Council do not become wholly UK-centric. Australia/NZ has fared reasonably well in terms of Board members in the past, but it was agreed that the situation must be carefully monitored. The Australian Senate proportional representation model was discussed as an example of how imbalances could be managed should they occur.

- There has been negative reaction to Australian members receiving emails promoting BCI workshops in the UK. Two outcomes have arisen from discussions on this point. Firstly, a reminder to all members that they should avail themselves of the reports which are produced from every workshop. Secondly, we will investigate the possibility of presenting some of the workshops locally using materials and some assistance provided by the UK.
- There has been some concern in Australia regarding the five-day course. It was originally developed assuming virtually no knowledge on the part of the participants thus anyone with a degree of experience may have felt that they already knew a proportion of the material. Work is underway to revise the course such that presenters will have clear guidelines as to what MUST be covered in detail and what MAY be abbreviated. Presenters have the option, of course, and are encouraged to enhance the course through discussing local examples. The BCI is strongly committed to a globally uniform base course, but this does not exclude appropriate local input.
- The release of the Australian draft BCM standard was discussed together with a briefing on the history of BCI relationships and communications with Standards Australia. A structured approach to consolidate the comments of Australian BCI members has been established and we shall continue to seek earlier and more effective input into future BCM standards and/or revisions. The support of all Australian members is sought to maximise local response and to seek improved recognition of the BCI in the future.
- There are key activities being considered and these will be discussed at the next Chapter Leadership Team Planning Day in October – watch this space! The UK team are keen to assist wherever they can.

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Photos



From left:
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From left:
Jan Gilbert
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The BCI team