

THE WESTERN AUSTRALIAN MARINE SCIENCE INSTITUTION

Chairman's Newsletter No. 5

18 September 2006

Greetings

This Newsletter No. 5 is being distributed to WAMSI Governors, Alternates and Administration, and also to a number of other people closely associated with WAMSI. Please feel free to distribute this Newsletter to anyone who may be interested in the development of WAMSI.

WAMSI headquarters

The new WAMSI Headquarters is now complete and operational. Ms Shelley McAlpine is to be congratulated on overseeing the office fit-out and move, and UWA is to be thanked for its sponsorship as the WAMSI Centre Agent and also for the newly furnished office space. AIMS is confirmed to co-locate in the first week of October. The two remaining WAMSI HQ staff positions: Executive Officer and PA will be advertised shortly. Please pass on this information to any likely interested applicants.

WAMSI web site

The WAMSI web site has recently gone on-line, see: www.wamsi.org.au

Whilst fairly basic at this point, the WAMSI HQ staff will be adding on all the existing nodal stakeholder workshop presentations, minutes of Board meetings and so on over the coming weeks. Over time, this will develop into a very useful resource and communication medium for WAMSI.

Third meeting of the interim Governing Board (25 August 2006)

The third meeting of the interim Governing Board was held on Friday 25 August 2006. The Board meeting was held in the WAMSI/AIMS Board Room.

It is important that the Governors be kept informed about the matters discussed at the Board Meetings. Below I have provided information about the more important items discussed at the 25 August meeting:

- Changes in Governors and Board membership
 - Mr Charles Thorn has moved from Edith Cowan University to Curtin University, but he remains on the Board as a nominee of the higher education institutions.
 - Professor Patrick Garnett becomes the WAMSI Governor from Edith Cowan University.
 - Dr Peter Murphy has resigned from the Department of Industry and Resources and thus is no longer a member of the Board. This leaves a vacancy on the Board as a nominee of the Parties not specifically identified for membership. I will give attention to this matter shortly.

- Appointment of WAMSI Chair for the next 12 months
The Joint Venture Agreement sets out that the Governors will appoint annually the Chair of the WAMSI Governing Board. The Governors have appointed Bernard Bowen as Chair for a further annual term.
- Appointment of Committees
 - The **Research & Development (R&D) Committee** is comprised of Dr Ayers, Dr Poiner and Professor Robertson. The Board has approved Dr Wally Cox being approached to join the R&D Committee and be the Committee Chair. Dr Cox has indicated his willingness to accept this position following receipt of a formal invitation from the WAMSI Chair.
 - The **Audit and Finance (A&F) Committee** is comprised of Dr Rogers and Mr Thorn. The Board has approved Ms Denise McComish, a partner with KPMG since 1989, being approached to join the A&F Committee as a member. Ms McComish has indicated her willingness to accept this position following receipt of a formal invitation from the WAMSI Chair.
 - The CEO will attend all meetings of the Committees and enter fully into the discussions. The WAMSI Chair is entitled to attend Committee meetings.
 - A **Communications Group** and an **Operations Group** are also being formed. The Communication Group is being ‘kicked off’ by Mr Thorn, Professor Robertson and Dr Blake (CEO) with a view to finalising the terms of reference and discussing additional membership at the first meeting. The Operations Group will be comprised of the Node Leaders and the CEO and will provide the main ‘engine room’ of WAMSI, as well as the forum for inter-Nodal exchanges.
- Progress on Agreements
There are four Agreements: the State Government Funding Agreement; the Joint Venture Agreement; The Centre Agent Agreement and the generic Project Agreement. These have taken longer than expected to bring to finalisation. However, there is ‘light at the end of the tunnel’ and it is reasonable to expect that they will be ready for the relevant signatures by early - mid October 2006.
- Progress on approval of research projects
 - The Node 1 (Marine Coastal Ecosystem Dynamics in Southwestern Australia) research project 2 (SW Australian coastal ecosystem characterisation, benthic ecology, connectivity & client delivery modules) has been approved subject to clarification of some minor issues. Research project 1 (SW Australian coastal biogeochemistry) will be approved by the R&D Committee on the satisfactory clarification of some residual issues.
 - The Node 2 (Climate Processes, Predictability and Impacts in a Warming ocean) research project 1 (Dynamics and predictability of the Indo-Pacific Ocean as a global condition on marine climate impacts in

WA) and research project 3 (Oceanic conditions at Ningaloo Reef – analysis of downscaling ocean climate into the Ningaloo Reef tract) have been approved subject to clarification of some minor issues. For research project 2 (Dynamics and impacts of the Leeuwin Current on the marine environment off Western Australia), some issues need to be addresses and it will then be further considered.

- The Node 3 (Managing and Conserving Western Australia’s Marine Environment) is the Ningaloo Research Program (NRP) and the Jurien Bay Research Program (JBRP). The NRP was commenced before the WA Government made a decision to grant funds for the establishment of WAMSI. The JBRP was commenced with funds provided by the Strategic Research Fund for the Marine Environment (SRFME). The Board has requested that a statement of transmittal be provided so that there is an official transfer of the NRP and the JBRP to the WAMSI research portfolio. When the statement of transmittal has been provided to the Board, it will be in a position to consider what further approvals are needed.
- The Node 4 (Sustainable Marine Ecosystems: Ecologically Sustainable Development for the Marine State’s Fisheries) Science Plan has been approved. The next step is for the individual research project plans to be submitted in accord with the Science Plan for consideration by the Board.
- A comprehensive discussion paper was submitted on Node 5 (Marine Biotechnology and Biodiversity). Following discussion by the Board, it was agreed that Node 7 (Aquaculture) would be combined with Node 5 and be limited to those aquaculture opportunities associated with marine biotechnology.
- The Node 6 proponents will be encouraged to progress the stakeholder workshop discussions on this Node and report back to the Board.

Meetings

The following meetings have been scheduled.

- Communications Group: Friday 29 September 2006.
- Audit and Finance Committee: Friday 29 September 2006.
- Operations Group: Tuesday 24 October 2006.
- Research and Development Committee: Thursday 2 November 2006.
- Governing Board: Friday 3 November 2006.

Kind regards

Bernard Bowen
(Chairman)