



RAILWAY TECHNICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALASIA

The RTSA is a joint technical society of Engineers Australia and
Engineering New Zealand



Strategic Plan to 2018-2021

“Raising the Bar in Railway Engineering”

**Output from RTSA Strategic Planning Workshop
September 11, 2018**

Context

“The Federal, State and Territory governments have committed \$100 billion over the next 12 years to infrastructure projects. This will ensure the capacity and operating efficiency of the national rail network can keep up with population growth and the demand for services. Improving connections to capital cities and ports will also reduce freight costs. These large-scale projects will demand skilled workers in infrastructure and will create opportunities for employment across the country.

The industry also faces exciting challenges and opportunities from technological change, including the development of a new fully-autonomous rail system. The onset of these changes is already being exemplified, both with the mining sector and in Sydney’s Metro North West project. New innovations including high-resolution tracking, condition monitoring and data capture are also rapidly changing the daily operations of the Rail industry. “- extract ‘Rail Skills Forecast 2018’

The implications of the substantial effort and funding focused on rail is a real opportunity for the Railway Technical Society of Australia (RTSA) to build membership and expand influence. The RTSA Executive Committee met for an all-day workshop to develop clarity regarding the focus and priorities of the RTSA in the short, medium and long term.

This output of the workshop is this strategic plan which is required to be provided to Engineers Australia and Engineering New Zealand as per the RTSA Construction, Clause 20:

20. RTSA must provide the authorised officer of Engineers Australia a high level three year rolling strategic plan which is subject to regular review and update. RTSA will make this plan available to ENZ. Without limiting the activities and operations of RTSA within its defined role, the plan is to set out how RTSA will:
- a. contribute to the retention and growth of Engineers Australia’s, ENZ and the Society’s membership;
 - b. contribute to the creation and distribution of the body of knowledge and the means by which this will occur;
 - c. contribute to the identification and provision of advice regarding specialist and/or industry changes in engineering practice standards and development needs through
 1. participation in the periodic reviews of Engineers Australia’s and ENZ competency standards;
 2. identification of specialist development needs of members and the provision of specialist CPD and technical training;
 - d. contribute to advancing engineering for the benefit of the community and the promotion of Engineers Australia and ENZ as the voice of the profession.

Summary

The workshop commenced with a focus on the 2012 SWOT. The previous RTSA Strategic Plan to 2015 is still relevant on a number of fronts, however some Opportunities and Threats have become more pressing to deal with as Australia moves into the 2020's. Notably:

- **Threats:**
 - The volunteer nature of RTSA (see Opportunities EA/EEA)
 - Face to face conference decline, increase in digital media
 - Competition from Member alternatives (RTAA, ARA, IRSE, PWI, YTP and Transport Society)
 - CORE versus Ausrail Exhibition (and other conferences)

- **Opportunities**
 - Differentiation – what's our brand?
 - Greater leverage of EA/EEA relationship (relieve volunteers and Committee members of transactional work and increased provision of training capability)
 - Digital media
 - Revenue in non-CORE years
 - Improvements in and around CORE
 - Continuing Professional Development (CPD)
 - University Challenge
 - Leveraging EA to develop overseas membership numbers
 - Develop exposure alternatives in addition to Track and Signal

Strategic Thinking Workshop output

The Executive Committee had a facilitated discussion focused on the priority areas of:

- Brand
- Conference on Railway Excellence (CORE)
- Digital Media
- Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

1. Workshop output - Brand

The Executive Committee were keen to explore the purpose, value proposition and a branding tag line for RTSA. A facilitated discussion brought out the following points.

Item 1.1 - What if RTSA Didn't Exist?

- Less informed, less connected, less CDP opportunities; people, industry, institutions
- Less chance of recognition
- Less access to shared; experience, knowledge, opportunities

Item 1.2 - What is the RTSA Value Proposition?

- We help you take control of your own career
- Members and their businesses can grow bigger, deeper, wider – networks, PD, knowledge
- We break down silos in practice of rail engineering;
- We're broad enough and narrow enough in our focus

Item 1.3 - What is the RTSA Purpose?

“Raising the bar in railway engineering.”

“Your role, Your business, Our society”

- Setting the standards and driving excellence in engineering
- Knowledge sharing to develop an integrated rail system
- Continuous professional development
- Supporting development of young engineers (Awards, University challenge)
- Focus on railway engineering solutions
- Learning from each other and others in the industry – get out of silo thinking
- Pathway into industry
- Recognition of outstanding people in the industry
- Evidence based practice
- Connecting people
- Knowledge bank + CORE – point people toward knowledge
- Clarifying where the ‘bar’ is
- Provide the ‘system’ perspective
- Evidence – technical advice

- Industry focused
- Learned society
- Professional Home for Life
- Bringing people and industry together;
 - Networking
 - Knowledge
 - Business development
- Breaking down the silos in the rail
 - Reliable, safer railways
- Bumper sticker message
 - 'Better Railway Engineering'
- Integrating various systems and disciplines

2. Workshop output – Digital Media

The threat of an increase in digital media over face to face conferences and a thirst for on line information has increased the need for the RTSA to sharpen its focus on the use of digital media on a number of fronts. The upcoming employment of a Marketing and Communications Officer to oversee this was a key element of the discussion in terms of the requirements the Society will have in the short, medium and long term.

The Executive Committee identified Digital Media as way to improve:

- Recognition as centre of excellence – doorway to Australia
- Knowledge sharing – Email, newsletter, slide packs
- Membership growth – Marketing, Events; CORE, Tech meeting, Tours
- Self-promotion i.e. RPEQ
- Professional recognition / competency / authority
- Knowledge dissemination (knowledge hub) – relevant information, high access traffic

Item 2.1 – Digital Media (Short, medium and long-term goals)

Short (next 12 months)	Medium (1 to 4 years)	Long (4 to 10 years)
Clarify Communications and Marketing Officer; expectations and requirements	Better knowledge of candidate members of the RTSA (Basic)	Better knowledge of candidate members of the RTSA (Advanced)
Easy way to join RTSA; fast, modern, easy (Ease of membership registration / de-registration)	Mentor linking	Underground content
Ease of membership for non-EA members	Webinar / Podcasting	No IP barriers
Dedicated RTSA APP (write up design specs).	Streaming of events anywhere in the world	VR assessment tools – CDP training
Regular notification of information of interest		No lock-in contracts

RTSA event information for the month		
--------------------------------------	--	--

3. Workshop output – CORE

As the flagship event and main fundraiser for the RTSA the Conference on Railway Excellence (CORE) is also a high priority in terms of increasing attendance and adding value. The Executive Committee explored short medium and long-term aspirations as well as complementary activities for CORE.

Item 3.1 – CORE (Short, medium and long-term goals)

Short (next 12 months)	Medium (1 to 4 years)	Long (4 to 10 years)
Lock in venue for 2022 – Auckland or Brisbane?	Co-branding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · CORE theme – co-branding with associated conference organisations 	Does CORE have a shelf life? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Renee Bennett thoughts · Will CORE be our central piece in the future?
Review lessons learned and financial close	Investigate Specialist Technical Conference in between CORE years. \$30 - \$40K revenue	
Investigate Mid-Career Award <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · 30-35 years · On merit · Quantum? \$ / Study tour/ \$5,000 in training receipts 	Attract more exhibitors to CORE Special Area of Practice	
Special Issue of Papers Identify top 6 papers for 2018 to focus on Excellence and leverage off these via a number of fronts including EA, digital media		
CORE 2020 rate / cost structure; Exec approval, May 2019		
Need more medium term thinking for CORE to leverage off other conferences e.g. 2021 UTP,		
Global Public Transport Summit (Melb)		

4. Workshop output – Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

As both a value proposition for members and an income generator CPD, through RTSA, is seen as an opportunity improvement and growth.

Short (next 12 months)	Medium (1 to 4 years)	Long (4 to 10 years)
Check IP of materials ARA	Capture knowledge of mentors / experiences engineers / medal recipients	
Commence discussions with EEA re ex ARA programs	Align where Chartered is evolving	
Record seminars (permission?)	These are publications suggested for you (app)	
Chapters & EA to ascertain capability to provide and record webinars		
Use of video conferencing in the meantime		
Update RTSA training page on website		
Investigate improvement of search tool in EA website		