

Environmental Health Association (Australia) Inc.

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The media and your EHAA

Mary Ward

"If you always do, what you always did, you'll always get what you always got", observed Mark Twain.

As EHAA media officer, a component of my job will be to help you take a new prospective on what you are already quietly doing well. Then reinvent how the community perceive your value by harnessing media interest to best advantage.

This will be collectively from the association's perspective but, more importantly, from that of individual members working to protect and support the public at a local level. Given the vast range of practice undertaken within health, building and planning portfolios the challenges and also the opportunities are great.

Participants of our media workshop at the recent EHAA conference were thoughtful, vocal and realistic on where they currently see the profession heading and areas that need to be addressed in the future. Even the title of

Environmental Health Officer is contentious for some EHAA members it seems.

Part of the perceived image problem facing EHOs (for want of an alternative title) is that the public is thought to have

the projects or perhaps good news stories in your areas and how could these be suitably packaged and delivered for media consumption?

You are invited to begin thinking and doing things differently, with the support of the EHAA to gain an enhanced image for EHOs as the expert body of health professionals that you are.

Please feel free to contact me about *any topic you feel is potentially news worthy* in your professional or perhaps personal world - to raise the profile of the environmental health profession.

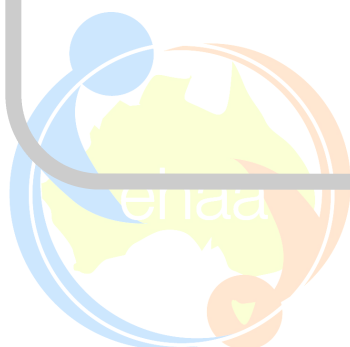


Media and your EHAA workshop held 23 September

little or no real idea what you actually do or who you are. While some have reflected that it would take a major epidemic for your true worth to become apparent - alternatively I suggest - proactively begin to raise public awareness of your contribution through the media.

The EHAA has invested in this media development post however; it can only be effective if members re-look at what is happening in their professional worlds with fresh eyes. What are

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Final Cane Toad Strategy Released

Office of Minister for Environment, Donna Faragher

During a recent visit to the Kimberley, Environment Minister Donna Faragher released the final 'Cane Toad Strategy for Western Australia 2009-2019'.

The document was prepared by the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) in consultation with a Kununurra-based Stakeholder Reference Group.

Mrs Faragher said the State Government recognised the need for a new focus for cane toad actions after they crossed the border into WA earlier this year. The cane toad front line is currently about 30km east of Kununurra.

"The final strategy focuses on a number of objectives for managing cane toads in WA over the next decade and aims to minimise their impacts and implement long-term management solutions," she said.

"Our priorities for this coming wet season include carrying out surveillance work to monitor and map cane toad populations at the front line, working with community groups to develop and

implement action plans for priority areas and cane toad education awareness in local communities.

"A range of measures are currently in place to assist the community in managing cane toads, including the establishment of disposal points in Kununurra, the creation of a database to record sightings and a series of information brochures and Cane Toad Packs."

The State Government received 22 submissions from stakeholders, businesses and individuals on the draft document after it was released for a six-week public comment period in May.

The Minister said feedback from the public recommended that the final strategy should be action oriented and streamlined, and be produced as a document that could be updated readily as new information came to hand.

The minister thanked everyone who contributed to the development of the



strategy, particularly those who made submissions on the draft.

The strategy has been framed on the basis of what is now known, and will take advantage of any new and better techniques to use against cane toads in the future, as they develop.

The Liberal-National Government has pledged ongoing funding to the Kimberley Toad Busters of \$1.2million over four years from 2008-09, so they can continue their on-the-ground field efforts.

To view the final strategy, visit www.dec.wa.gov.au/canetoads

"More than \$1 million pledged to the toad busters!"

Special General Meeting

The Special General meeting was conducted in accordance with the EHAA Constitution and matters raised on the agenda were adopted.

EHAA Annual General Meeting

The annual general meeting was held at the Esplanade River Suites on 24th September.

Following the Chairman's and Treasurer's report the first element of business was to appoint the new Executive committee.

The AGM saw the motion passed that the position of Chairman and Vice Chairman are now referred to President and Vice President respectively. The motion put forward outlined that these titles better reflected the active role the two position

entail.

Returning to Office is Llew Withers as the now President, Peter McKenzie as Vice President, Secretary Donald Howell along with new treasurer Garry Tucker. The five members making up the EHAA committee - Elizabeth Re, Piotr Zenni, Darrell Monteiro, Trevor Walker and John Mitchell. Welcome to the new comers.

If you'd like further information regarding the committee or changes to association rules please email us at info@envirohealthaustralia.com.au



2009 EHAA National Conference



Welcome to the Fifth Annual National Environmental Health Conference

Proudly supported by:



The 2009 Environmental Health Association (Australia) Conference is over for another year.

The successful conference brought more than 40 delegates and guests from local and state government, mining sector and private enterprise, from a far a field as Christmas Island.

Delegates enjoyed the topics this year that covered various elements of the new Food Act and its implementation, water safety with a particular focus on Spray Park risk

management, new directions for waste management, indigenous health issues, and emergency management.

EHAA presented all delegates and speakers with a small gift of a USB Memory Stick/Pen which was well received by all.

The Dux Restaurant put on a fantastic conference dinner with fabulous service, food and atmosphere. Delegates, guests and sponsors let their hair down and all had a great time.

Congratulations to award winners Llew Withers and Dr Richard Lugg which were presented by Dr Peter Flett at the official opening.

EHAA sends out our greatest thanks to all who attended for making the 2009 conference the success that it was.

Have your say

The EHAA welcomes relevant and topical letters from members and readers. If you have an opinion and would like to express it, write to the Editor EHAA Newsletter and leave your name & contact details with a copy of your article. (max 500 words).

Please advise the editor if you wish to remain anonymous.



“State government announces five new aboriginal children and family centres”

New centres to help close Aboriginal health and education gap

Office of Minister for Education; Tourism, Elizabeth Constable

Five new children and family centres will be established across Western Australia by 2014 in an ambitious move to vastly improve education and health outcomes for Aboriginal children in the next decade.

Education Minister Liz Constable said the first centre would be established in Halls Creek, with the building scheduled for completion by the end of 2010.

Facilities in Fitzroy Crossing, Kununurra, Roebourne and the Swan region would follow.

The centres would be established in areas of disadvantaged population, in particular Aboriginal families,

and included early childhood learning and care; pre-pregnancy; antenatal; teenage health services; and maternal and child health services. These would effectively give families a one-stop shop for their early education and health needs.

“The State Government, as part of the Indigenous Early Childhood Development National Partnership, is aiming to improve health outcomes and halve the gap in reading, writing and numeracy achievements between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal children within the next 10 years,” Dr Constable said.

“If we want to change behaviours and outcomes, we need to change delivery

of services.

“We need to ensure the services delivered are high quality and culturally sensitive, by engaging in extensive community consultation to ensure community ownership of the centres.”

Specific locations of the centres are being determined but many may be built on school sites.

The Minister said the Department of Education and Training's Office of Early Childhood Development and Learning would administer \$42.35million provided by the Federal Government in the next six financial years for infrastructure, staff and resources.



James G Harcombe Professional Excellence Award

The James G Harcombe Professional Excellence Award was presented by Director General for Health, Dr Peter Flett at the official opening of the 2009 EHAA National Conference to the deserving winner Llew Withers

The award was established following the death of James Harcombe in August 2007.

James was a founding member of the Environmental Health Association Australia and only 30 years old when he died of a brain stem tumour.

James was a practicing Environmental Health Officer and Scientific Officer employed in the Food Safety Branch of the Environmental Health Directorate.

James quickly established a rapport with colleagues in local & state government agencies with his depth of knowledge regarding Food Legislation and Public Health law generally.

His father Geoff and the EHAA came to the realization that there should be established an award to recognize the skills that James brought to the Environmental Health profession.

James was the author of various submissions produced for the Association. The attainment of these skills, along with his willingness to provide quality advice and assistance to colleagues should be encouraged and recognized by way of an annual award.

There are 3 criteria that a person may be nominated for the award:

First that must have made a demonstrable and recognizable contribution in improving the level of environmental health within their area of influence, which esteems that person/s in their profession above what would normally be expected of their position;
OR



From left Dr Peter Flett, Llew Withers, Geoff Harcombe

they have made a recognizable contribution in mentoring a new graduate who has commenced his or her professional employment;

OR

someone who has demonstrated an ongoing high level of communication and expertise in environmental health.

The Environmental Health Association (Australia) congratulates Llew for for his demonstrable and recognisable contribution in improving the level of environmental health and thank Geoff and his family for their ongoing support of this prestigious award.

Nominations for the James G Harcombe award are accepted annually from beginning of May through to end of July, if you know someone who is deserving of this award please email your nominations to the secretary@envirohealthaustralia.com.au

Congratulations Llew Withers, winner of the 2009 James G Harcombe Award.

Dr Richard Lugg Award for Sustained Excellence in the Advancement of the Public Health and Environmental Health

The Dr Richard Lugg Award for Sustained Excellence in the Advancement of the Public Health and Environmental Health Professions recognises those who have made an outstanding contribution to the profession over a period in excess of 20 years.

As the Association wanted the winners of this Award to form the selection panel for future nominations, they felt it was only fitting that Dr Richard Lugg be the inaugural winner of



Dr Peter Flett presenting the inaugural Dr Richard Lugg award to Dr Richard Lugg

this Award.

Dr Richard Lugg is a public health physician specialising in the links between water and human health.

He has consulted both to public health agencies and to the water industry in areas including drinking water, recreational water, water reuse, biosolids reuse and arboviral disease associated with water-based vector breeding.

Dr Lugg's contribution to the field of environmental health and public health

has spanned in excess of 40 years. Dr Lugg has held the positions of Director Environmental Health, Executive Director Public Health and Principal Medical Officer for the Department of Health in Western Australia.

Dr Lugg's contribution to the field of public health includes all manner of Committee contribution at state and national level in the field of Food Standards, Marine Water Quality Guidelines, Drinking Water Guidelines, Use of Reclaimed Water, Waste Water Re-use Guidelines and Public Health Administration.

Dr Lugg has also chaired seven principal committees in Western Australia including the State Advisory Committee for the Purity of Water, State Fluoridation Committee of Public Water Supplies, and the WA Mosquito Control Advisory Committee.

At an international level, Dr Lugg chaired the World Health Organisation's Expert Consultation in Farnham, United Kingdom in April 2001 on "Bathing Water Quality and Human Health: Faecal Pollution". He contributed to the content in the final report by WHO 'Guidelines for safe recreational water environments, volume 1,

coastal and fresh waters, 2003'. With this knowledge, Dr Lugg was invited to contribute to the National Health and Medical Research Council's Australian Guidelines for Managing Risks in Recreational Waters 2006 and played a significant role in Chapter 5 dealing with water borne microbial pathogens.

In retirement, Dr Lugg has been called upon for his expertise in public health and has worked part time in the Office of the Chief Medical Adviser.

Dr Lugg has recently become a Rotarian and has loaned his expertise to Rotary International assisting public health agencies in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania on public and environmental health matters. This has involved the undertaking of assessments relating to issues such as: malaria, water and sanitation, and education.

The Environmental Health Association Australia are delighted that Dr Lugg agreed to have his name associated with this Excellence award and look forward to the development of the medallion that will become the symbol of Environmental Health Excellence in the future.

If you know of a person befitting this award please nominate them by emailing their details to info@envirohealthaustralia.com.au.

Congratulations Dr Richard Lugg, winner of the inaugural Dr Richard Lugg Award in 2009.

MEMBERSHIP

EHAA was formed to enable members to express their opinions across a range of public health and environmental health concerns. The second central feature is that, as a federated, autonomous incorporated organisation, all decision making to be undertaken at State Level.

The *EHAA* objectives are very broad, decidedly so to allow our organisation to move in many directions, to reflect members' needs and the changing face of environmental health.

The federated system places emphasis on ensuring accountability for members' funds and communication to outside stakeholders. The *EHAA* manages its own budgets and reports through an annual general meeting to members. This ensures that their local concerns are reflected in decision-making and State organisations can be flexible and innovative as they conduct their day-to-day business.

The federated system ensures that formation of an Australian Council is constituted by representative State bodies.

EHAA conducts an Annual Conference and in each membership year will:

1. conduct (4) SIG sessions with complimentary members' attendance
2. return an operating profit for investment in the future of the organisation
3. publish quarterly electronic bulletins
4. launch an "Employment Directory" for professionals and graduates accessed via our website and newsletter
5. provide regular industry mail outs
6. actively represent members in a wide range of government and industry discussion papers

If you would like to become an *EHAA* member or would like more information about becoming a member please visit our membership page on www.envirohealthaustralia.com.au or email info@envirohealthaustralia.com.au



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Employment

For full details visit www.envirohealthaustralia.com.au

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Hendry Group, VIC

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To receive email updates of positions vacant, register on the Environmental Health Association (Australia) website.

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