

Minutes of ANBUG executive committee meeting, 20th May 2016

Present: E. Kisi (chair,telephone), E. Gray (telephone), I. Gentle (telephone), J. Hester, T. Soehnel (telephone), M. Tehei (telephone)

Apologies: A. Paradowska

1. Meeting opened at 2.35pm.
2. The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted.
3. ANSTO restructure. The recent restructuring of the ANSTO research institutes was discussed. E Kisi and E Gray had a telephone conversation with the ANSTO CEO on the 5th of May. Key points that were noted:
 - (a) The Bragg Institute has been renamed to 'Neutron Scattering' and is now five levels down the org chart instead of 4, with many more siblings
 - (b) The top 15 management positions were spilled and filled
 - (c) The previous head of the Bragg Institute, R Robinson, was not appointed to head Neutron Scattering
 - (d) This is the result of a year-long internal ANSTO process

The committee expressed a number of concerns with the restructure, in particular:

- (a) the lack of consultation with external stakeholders, including ANBUG
- (b) an apparent lack of understanding of how scientific research institutes function
- (c) a dilution of the internal influence of both the Bragg Institute and the Australian Synchrotron, despite their overwhelming contribution to ANSTO research output

ACTION: Draft letter to ANSTO CEO expressing our understanding of the situation and our concerns, to be distributed to committee members before sending (E Kisi)

ACTION: Following this, to distribute a statement to the ANBUG membership with a response to the changes (E Kisi).

After a discussion on the best way to recognise the contribution of R Robinson to our community it was decided to nominate him for an ANBUG award.

4. PAC report. E Kisi reported that 1152 days out of a requested 1758 days were allocated by the PAC. One new program proposal was approved, together with three program reports.

5. Feedback from ANBUG for Bragg Advisory Committee. J Hester circulated five items of feedback received from the membership, which E Kisi will combine with information provided by users through the Bragg Institute user portal when giving a presentation to the BIAC next week. In general, user ratings of instruments are between 4.3 and 4.8 out of 5 and have improved continually over time. The 12T magnet was the ancillary with the most issues. Other issues include the motel and availability of food on the weekends, with responses divided on the need for remote access to experiments.
6. Elections: nominations will be closed in September with voting to finish before the AANSS meeting. Members should think of suitable candidates for vice-president. It was noted that ANBUG has never had a female president, so the time is right to nominate a woman for vice-president.
7. AANSS meeting. The dates for the meeting are the 5th and 6th of December. An organiser for the meeting needs to be found. In the past this has been an AINSE fellow, but as this scheme has stopped there are no obvious choices this year. ACTION: find a person to organise the AANSS conference (all members).
8. AINSE support for attending overseas experiments. I Gentle (member of AINSE council) thought that this would not be seen as a good use of limited AINSE resources. The current emphasis is on providing top-ups, e.g. to postgraduate researchers, which is seen as providing the maximum benefit to member organisations.
9. Other sources of funding for overseas experiments: It is not clear who to lobby for this. The AS has a long-running overseas access scheme which distributes around \$180,000 per year. Now that the AS is coming into the ANSTO fold on a notionally equal footing to the Bragg, there would be a symmetry in having a similar program for neutron access. The new head of Neutron Scattering, J Schulz, administered the old access scheme and may be receptive to restarting it. ACTION: E Kisi to discuss with J Schulz.
10. Next meeting: Sometime in mid-July
11. Meeting closed at 3.55pm