



The Great Australian Byte

The Newsletter of the Australian Geoscience Information Association (Inc)
July 2009, Volume 10 Part 2 ISSN 1325-3700

Your opportunity to have your data management questions
answered by the experts!

**Join your industry colleagues on a free
tour of**

SpectrumData's Data Management Centre



When: Friday 24 July 2009

Time: 3.30 - 5.00

Location: The Australian Data Management Centre,
14 Brodie Hall Drive, Technology Park, Bentley

Please RSVP by Tuesday 21 July 2009 to Lyn Trouchet
(Ltrouche@barrick.com)



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NOTICE OF 2009 AGIA NATIONAL ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

To be held at

The Brass Monkey

Cnr James and William Street, Northbridge

Tuesday 22 September 2009

5:30pm for 6:00 start,

followed by dinner for those who wish to stay

(Order and pay individually for meal)

The [official notice of meeting](#) is included at the end of this Newsletter, including a call for nominations and the draft agenda for the meeting, in accordance with the Association Constitution. **Please note the deadline for nominations to the committee is 31 August 2009.**

Please RSVP to Lyn Trouchet (Ltrouche@barrick.com)

AGIA is a member of the Australian Geoscience Council





CAPITALISING ON UNSTRUCTURED DATA

Aligning business strategy with information assets

27-28 May 2009, Holiday Inn, Perth

The ARK Group conference held on 27 May was a relatively rare event in that it did have a noticeable emphasis on the oil and gas industry and information management. In my experience there are few seminars or conferences that focus on both so I am grateful to AGIA for the opportunity to attend.

One of the impressions of the conference was that no one was saying anything that is earth shatteringly new – communities of practice, knowledge management, and other concepts weren't invented yesterday (and neither were the two clichés I've already used in this article) – but a lot of the value of conferences is in the opportunity to connect with other people, discuss how to handle problems, share war stories, and get the opportunity to think about how we do things without the usual distractions at work. 'Only connect', as E M Forster put it, is not just a social imperative but a business imperative too as businesses can't leverage what their employees know if they don't know what their employees know or if their employees don't share their knowledge.

Mike Pearson was the first presenter with "Identifying your business needs: linking unstructured data to strategy" as his topic. I found this presentation to be at a much more strategic level than I'm used to but it did emphasise that "governance is critical", tying in with Jane Larke's presentation. Mike made the point that there are no quick wins, but there are successful milestones.

Mark Bennett's presentation was called "Using communities of practice to make sense of unstructured information." This was a look at the use of communities of practice at Rio Tinto, with a few examples from other companies thrown in. Oil and gas or mining companies can certainly reap a substantial return on investment on establishing communities of practice when it enables increased production or the resolution of problems with very expensive equipment. One of his points was don't let best practice get in the way of better practice as what is currently "best practice" won't remain so forever – you need to have flexibility.

The panel discussion was called 'building a financial case for investing in an unstructured data project: the costs and benefits', although perhaps Machiavelli 101 would be a better name as the emphasis was on handling office politics to make sure that your project gets approved. It may well be a really good and worthwhile project but you need to do some work to make sure that it is seen as worthwhile by whoever is approving the budget. Some of the advice given was:

- be aware of the politics around a project,
- understand who is making the decision and their hot buttons,
- look at the focus of the organisation – increasing revenue, cost cutting, strategic imperatives such as growth, risk management,
- find a champion for the project,
- you do need numbers but numbers alone are not sufficient to justify a project.



“Governance: ensuring good management of, and accountability for information” was the topic of Jane Larke’s presentation, which used Curtin University as a case study. Like most organisations, Curtin University has room for improvement in its records management, but it is putting in place an information governance framework, policies, and strategies for communicating with all staff so that it has a holistic approach aligned with the business goals and needs of Curtin.

“Evaluating the information life cycle” was Anne Phillips’s case study of Nido Petroleum. This was probably the presentation I could identify the most with and it was interesting to hear how another company was handling the problems (perhaps I should call that “challenges”) of handling legacy data, managing disparate sources of information and varying media types.

John Townsend started his presentation on “How NOPSA got its unstructured and structured data under control” with reference to the Piper Alpha disaster as the reason NOPSA exists. Not having information management could be a life and death matter and the pictures of Piper Alpha were certainly a dramatic start. NOPSA is using Objective to replace the old way of spreadsheets and shared drives. There is a recent article by John Townsend: “Mixing Petroleum, Water, and Information Management to create a Safer Working Environment” in Informaa Quarterly May 2009, pages 32-33, which discusses some of the issues covered in his paper at the conference.

Cairo Walker was the last presenter, speaking on “Making use of unstructured data in the real world”. I thought she was a really interesting speaker and the real world examples certainly make my problems with technology pale into comparison. One of her examples was the World Wildlife Fund and the problems of disseminating information to staff in the field – we take access to the internet for granted but in remote areas where they don’t have electricity available all the time or where the telephone lines go down, relying on the internet is not the solution but having someone deliver hard copy documents is.

A copy of the presentations was provided to attendees. Unfortunately all the presentations are on Powerpoint. These are a useful memory jogger for those who were there but can be a bit cryptic to anyone else and leave out some of the useful detail. A written paper would be far more useful and substantive (I won’t go into my opinions on Powerpoint too deeply here, suffice to say that a comparison of the text of the Gettysburg address with a Powerpoint version at <http://norvig.com/Gettysburg/> shows the deficiencies).

Did I find the conference useful? Yes, it was an interesting and stimulating discussion and many people stayed around to chat after closing. No brand new ideas but certainly some ideas to think over as to how I might apply them at work, and a fair amount of pragmatic and practical advice. It was stimulating hearing a variety of ideas and perspectives and a bonus to be able to discuss seismic and well data without having to explain what they are.

Camille Peters



FROM TAKEOVER TO TAKE OFF: ISSUES IN MANAGING DATA TRANSFERS AND MIGRATION IN THE CURRENT FRENETIC M&A ENVIRONMENT

**PRESENTED AT AESC 2008, PERTH BY ELIZABETH AMANN (PRESENTER),
MARGARET ELLIS, AND SUE GRENNAN**

Much Ni & Au ground was divested during the late 1990s to early 2000s. The accompanying data compilations were/are seen as a valuable trading commodity and often attributed an intrinsic value. However usually there is an overwhelming amount of data involved and in areas where exploration has had a long life-span, the data has had numerous derivations, and exists in a variety of formats, conditions, and repositories.

The acquirer wants all data entitled, however the supplier also needs to protect potential future interests. Complicating issues included the fact that the current ground-swell of geoscientists, accountants and lawyers who are floating/populating the up coming juniors & new ventures originated from the majors and are acutely aware of the historic data stores available and the expectation is to gain all data in a useful condition.

Sourcing and packaging data for handover, and then compiling and making use of that acquired data after receipt present issues, some which are surprisingly similar for both parties. Timing is critical for both vendor and purchaser – the supplier must legally comply with conditions of agreement and the receiver needs to translate that data into useful information for on-ground targets and exploration/mine planning as quickly as possible.

Using industry examples of issues involved in recent mergers and acquisitions, the paper will concentrate on issues relating to management and logistics of data transfer during a sale or joint venture agreement, both from supplier and receiver point of view.

The presentation slides will be available to view on the AGIA website under [Resources>Events](#).



AGIA NEWS

DON'T FORGET TO RENEW YOUR AGIA MEMBERSHIP

Thank you very much for your support of AGIA, currently operating as a small independent group of members with an interest in geoscience information. We had been approached by Australian Institute of Geoscientists (AIG) to join with them, and the National Committee is now awaiting the outcome of the merger talks between the Geological Society of Australia (GSA) and AIG before reconsidering the possibility of joining the new body as a special interest group. The AGIA National Committee will keep you informed of the progress of these deliberations.

In the meantime, we would very much appreciate your continued support as you renew your membership for the coming financial year. You will note that after many, many years the membership rates have changed. This change was agreed at last year's AGIA Annual General Meeting.

I look forward to receiving your renewal. I will process all I can before I go on long-service leave (Aug-Oct). However if your renewal comes in whilst I am off campus, it will be held until I return and I will process it then. The renewal form was emailed to all members recently. You can also access the membership form on the [AGIA website](#).

With best wishes on behalf of the National Committee.

**Dr Kerry Smith, FALIA
Membership Secretary, AGIA (Inc.)**

FROM THE NEWSLETTER EDITOR

I am happy to receive articles for the newsletter and items for the website, so if you have any suggestions, or something to share with fellow AGIA members, please contact me or another member of the committee.

Jenny Mikucki

UPCOMING CONFERENCES AND SYMPOSIA

[SGA 2009](#)

**SMART SCIENCE FOR EXPLORATION AND MINING, TOWNSVILLE,
17-20 AUGUST 2009.**

[34TH IGC](#)

**34TH INTERNATIONAL GEOLOGICAL CONGRESS, BRISBANE,
2-10 AUGUST 2012**



SNIP'ITS

SPECTRUMDATA WIN GEOSCIENCE AUSTRALIA MEDIA STORAGE CONTRACT – 7 JULY 2009

SpectrumData, the largest specialist data migration, recovery and transcription company in the southern hemisphere, today announced it has won a contract worth over half a million dollars from Geoscience Australia, Australia's national geoscience research and information organisation.

After recently completing the restoration and recovery of the digital assets of the Commonwealth Government, SpectrumData was chosen to supply world class data storage products to help preserve this valuable asset of national significance.

Under the terms of the deal, SpectrumData will deliver 2,500 3592 Gen II extra length media cartridges, each holding up to 700 gigabytes of data. This constitutes one of the largest 3592 cartridge orders in Australia this year.

Geoscience Australia provides information which enables the government to make informed decisions about the allocation of resources, the management of the environment and the safety of critical infrastructure. The 3592 cartridges will be used to back-up copies of the organisation's data in robotic tape libraries. These will be held in offsite storage for archival and disaster recovery purposes – ensuring the availability and protection of this valuable information for generations to come.

Geoscience Australia placed significant emphasis on the technical merits of the bids and SpectrumData's supply history and proven success in large scale data management was a crucial factor in the selection process.

SpectrumData is a long standing supplier to Geoscience Australia and has been heavily involved in completing the restoration of the entire geophysical data collection held at Geoscience Australia, including valuable seismic and geophysical data.

Guy Holmes, Director of SpectrumData said, "Geoscience Australia were looking for a company that had a proven track record in managing large amounts of data and could give the Commonwealth value for money at the same time. Winning this contract is a validation of all the quality work we have provided for Geoscience Australia in the past."

Article courtesy [SpectrumData](#)

SCIENCE MOVES FROM THE STACKS TO THE WEB; PRINT TOO PRICEY (ARS TECHNICA ARTICLE)

<http://arstechnica.com/web/news/2009/07/academic-publisher-reportedly-going-online-only.ars>



CALL FOR CHAPTER PROPOSALS FOR AN EDITED COLLECTION ON CORPORATE LIBRARIES

We are seeking chapter proposals for a new edited collection on corporate libraries. This book will be an edited collection of chapters describing best practices in a variety of corporate libraries worldwide, providing both a foundation of knowledge for scholars in library and information science areas and information and ideas for practicing corporate librarians. The editors have obtained an interest from the publisher, and a contract is pending a list of potential chapters and contributors.

Please submit a proposal of 250 words, or a full chapter, for consideration.

Topics may include, but are not limited to:

- Planning a Corporate Library, including chapters on topics such as design, architecture, and facility planning, budget and staffing, long range planning, technology planning, hiring, recruiting, and training for a new library.
- Collaborations, including chapters on interlibrary lending and borrowing, joint libraries, consortia and other types of collaborations and organizations.
- Technology, including chapters on best practices, discussions of the use of technology, and the scope of a corporate librarian's job such as what technological support they offer, web sites and internet databases in relations to corporate librarianship, electronic services.
- Staffing, including human resources, continuing education, professional networking, core competencies, management, routines
- Communications, including articles regarding communications; for example, with satellite offices, with overseas branches, interdepartmental, computer mediated communication, and more.
- Knowledge Management/ Organization, including topics covering how Corporate Libraries manage data and knowledge and organize it, and share it.
- Special Issues. This section will include articles about any special issues pertaining to Corporate Librarianship, such as current challenges, copyright and other legal topics, especially those that are unique to corporate librarianship.

Please send chapters or chapter proposals by July 28, 2009, through email to Sigrid Kelsey and Jorie Porter, editors. sigridkelsey@gmail.com

MILESTONE BULLETIN ON THE DEVONIAN REEF COMPLEXES OF THE CANNING BASIN AVAILABLE SOON

Geological Survey of Western Australia Bulletin 145 Devonian reef complexes of the Canning Basin, Western Australia, by PE Playford, RM Hocking, and AE Cockbain, will be released in early August.

[GSWA home page](#)



GA RELEASES A NEW DIGITAL GEOLOGICAL MAP OF AUSTRALIA

A new digital surface geology dataset covering Australia at 1:1 million scale was released recently by Geoscience Australia.

See [the March edition of AusGeoNews](#) for details.

REPORT ON UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY DEPT OF GEOSCIENCES DATA MANAGEMENT MODEL SURVEY, DECEMBER 2008

Under the auspices of the Australian Partnership for Sustainable Repositories.

http://www.apsr.edu.au/publications/tanner_data_management_model_survey.pdf

WEB SITES & MAILING LISTS OF INTEREST

SLA 2009 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

View [Conference Handouts and Podcasts](#)

WAIN MAILING LIST

WAIN@lists.curtin.edu.au

<https://lists.curtin.edu.au/mailman/listinfo/wain>

GEONET

Geonet mailing list: Geonet@purdue.edu

<https://lists.purdue.edu/mailman/listinfo/geonet>

LIST OF GEOSCIENCE ASSOCIATIONS

Committee member Camille Peters has compiled a list of geoscience associations, which is available on the AGIA website:

<http://www.agia.org.au/resources/GEOSCIENCE-ASS.htm>



AUSTRALIAN GEOSCIENCE INFORMATION ASSOCIATION INC.

NATIONAL COMMITTEE 2008–09

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<p><u>AGC REPRESENTATIVES</u></p> <p>SUE GRENNAN, MARGARET ELLIS</p>	



AGIA National Committee

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2009

The 2009 Annual General Meeting of Australian Geoscience Information Association Incorporated will be held at:

TIME: 6:00 p.m.
DATE: Tuesday 22th September 2009
VENUE: Upstairs at The Brass Monkey Hotel, James and William Streets, Northbridge WA

In accordance with the Constitution of AGIA, I call for nominations for the following positions:

- President
- Vice-President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Committee members – at least 4, of which one is the Editor and all of whom shall be members of the Association. Nominations for positions on the National Committee shall consist of members within the relevant Branch, in this instance, Western Australia,

Nominations should be made on the attached form and sent to the Secretary at the address below no later than close of business on **Monday 31 August 2009**.

The order of business for the meeting is on the attached agenda. Other business items, or motions to be considered at the AGM should be notified to the Secretary at the address below, or emailed to Ltrouche@barrick.com no later than close of business on **Monday 31 August 2009** for inclusion in a revised agenda.

Lyn Trouchet
Secretary, AGIA
C/O Barrick Gold of Australia
Locked Bag 12, Cloisters Square WA 6850
Telephone: (08) 9212-5880



AGIA National

2009 Annual General Meeting

Agenda

Meeting to be held **Upstairs at The Brass Monkey Hotel, James and William Streets, Northbridge WA, Tuesday 22nd September 2009 commencing at 6:00 p.m.**

Order of business

- Opening of meeting
- Minutes of previous AGM 16th September 2008
- Reports
 - Treasurer
 - President

- Election of Office Bearers
 - President
 - Vice-President
 - Secretary
 - Treasurer
 - Committee Members – at least 4

- Other Business
- Close of Meeting



Nomination Form

AGIA NATIONAL COMMITTEE 2009/2010

I accept nomination for the position of

Proposer
Please print name

Proposer
Please sign

Secunder.....
Please print name

Secunder.....
Please sign

Nominee.....
Please print name

Nominee.....
Please sign