

PLUMBING COALITION AUSTRALIA

Minutes of meeting held Thursday 2 March 2006 at 160 O'Connell Street, Adelaide

Present:	Stephen Movley	Institute of Plumbing Australia Inc.
	Derek Harris	AHSCA–South Australia
	Mark Vinall	AHSCA
	John Gill	AUSTAP
	Tim Fisher	AUSTAP
	John Power	Connection Magazines
	Alan Grasset	IPA–Education
	David Williams	MPA–ACT
	Greg McElroy	MPA–NSW
	Paul Naylor	MPA–NSW
	Robert Farnham	MPA–SA
	Hans Verdouw	MPA–Tas
	Peter Higgins	MPA–WA
	Matthew Minagall	NPRF–SA Water
	Fred Baltetsch	NPSTAG
	Gary Cook	NPSTAG–NSW
	John Callaghan	TAFE–SA
Apologies:	Graeme Perry	ANZRA
	Paul Degnan	AUSTAP
	Jeff Patchell	Connection Magazines
	David Cashmere	DET–NSW
	Phil Quinnell	MPA–ACT
	Adrian Hart	MPA–Qld
	Bob Kimlin	MPA–Qld
	Adrian Cowie	MPA–Tas
	Noel Abercromby	MPA–WA
	Alex Shearer	NPSTAG–Secretary
	Geoff Moore	TAFE–NSW
	Bob Puffett	WorldSkills

1 Welcome and introductions

Stephen Movley welcomed all attendees to the meeting and invited all members to introduce themselves to the meeting.

2 Selection of Meeting Chairperson

Moved Gary Cook, seconded John Gill that Stephen Movley chair the meeting.

Carried

3 Secretary's Report

Stephen confirmed that reports had been issued prior to the meeting. The reports raised some questions which will be addressed in today's meeting.

4 Name

There was a discussion on the name of the group.

Moved Greg McElroy, seconded Gary Cook that the name of the group be Plumbing Coalition.

After further discussion an amendment was tabled.

Moved John Callaghan, seconded John Power that the name be Plumbing Coalition Australia.

Carried

4 What organisations should be members of the group?

It was agreed that the list distributed at the meeting was appropriate. Discussion took place on what other groups may be considered.

5 How best to promote the cause

There was a discussion on what this group is about and whether it is a forum or a peak body. It was agreed that the group would not represent each state individually in legislative matters. Stephen confirmed that the original concept was that the group was really a melting pot where discussions by the group would hopefully reach a consensus that could be promoted by the individual member organisations as a national view.

The 2006 National Plumbing Conference being held in conjunction with the World Plumbing and Training Forum was discussed at length. Concern was expressed at the divisive nature of the activities undertaken by the Victorian component, especially in regard to the World Industry Training Forum when there is already a group operating in that role.

The opinion was expressed that this group needs to get "out there" and sell itself. The industry and politicians need to be informed that this group exists and that the other is a representative of Victoria only, not the whole country.

Fred Baltetsch spoke from the point of view of the trainers and the frustration of dealing with the industry.

It was agreed the aims of the group need to be defined, and this would be a step forward in declaring the members as a group and listing the membership of the group. The assessment of education is critical and feeds directly back into licensing, the issue of health and promotion of the industry. Promotion of the industry to the youth at schools is a very important factor. Codes and Standards are another issue that this group could focus on. Matters could then be pushed politically. The aims need to be clear and could be published through the magazine. It was considered once this was all established it would be clear to the rest of Australia that there is one major group and the other is on the outside.

It was reiterated that unity is the key as divisiveness is the problem at the moment. This group is seen as a prime opportunity to establish common goals and a degree of unity framed.

It was suggested that the best way would be if the IPA was prepared to act as facilitator for the body. It was agreed that it is important in this sort of forum to respect each other's opinions as members come from different areas of the industry. It was agreed the aim of the group is to support and improve plumbing within Australia.

The following were listed as aims for the group to consider:

- 1) Education/continued education
- 2) Assessment within education
- 3) Licensing
- 4) Health aspects in plumbing
- 5) Promotion of industry
- 6) Careers in the plumbing industry
- 7) Codes and Standards
- 8) Audit of educational facilities and assessment

Alan Grasset spoke about the lack of national standards in education. Variations in each state are very real, but students should learn to cover all areas. Water is water and waste is waste, it doesn't vary. The national package was discussed in depth. NPSTAG advised the competency level is already in process in NSW and Vic. The number of competencies is extreme.

Fred Baltetsch spoke about NPSTAG and the role it is undertaking and the training packages in place. There was a discussion on the development of a national package and the streams being included. Working very hard at getting consistency in training, but the frustrations they are experiencing are getting release for staff to attend the National NPSTAG meetings. In response to a question about membership from MPA, Fred confirmed membership for private RTOs is on their agenda at the moment. The variance in number of competencies from state to state was discussed and the minor nature of some items which could be incorporated with other levels to reduce the number of competencies. Paul Naylor spoke to some of the issues raised by Fred. In relation to the competencies: What is the role of employer, what is the role of trainer, how is it measured, who sets out a process for determining competency?

Following the discussion Alan Grasset expressed this confirms the need for this group. The lack of communication within the industry is a major issue. Paul Naylor expressed the opinion that a major reason for the problems emanates from the Industry Skills Council.

Tim Fisher raised the issue of perspective of what a plumber does and how it is far more than the general idea. The profile of a plumber needs to be raised.

Paul Naylor raised the question of Certificate 4 and what is being referred to as orphaned 19 units. There is a proposal for a Certificate 4 in Management and Certificate in Operations, and development of another course. Fred Baltetsch responded. His belief was the 19 orphaned units were built into a qualification to become a pathway. He will check on the latest information he has received and advise the group. The concern expressed was that it makes three streams out of the Certificate 4.

Peter Higgins spoke to whether the group is a peak body or a forum. The various State Master Plumber Associations have agreed to form a group to be a peak body for Contractor/Employer Organisations. It will include six states and leave the door open for the two remaining states to join. This is a union of employers. In relation to the Coalition they believe the IPA has a role to play in bringing all the industry together and facilitating the whole thing and the MPA is happy to be a part of it.

6 Aim of forum

Stephen then asked the meeting what they hope to achieve from this forum. The consensus was that each meeting would present varying achievements. The State MPA's had informally met before the meeting and fed back their position as a united front. It was considered the peak body comes on performance. An address was considered to be c/- the IPA as an independent site. An 1800 number is considered necessary. In response to a question on the cost of running the meeting Stephen advised a budget of \$2,500–3,000 was used. This cost includes Stephen's airfares, accommodation, room hire, lunch, minute secretary and secretarial costs. This cost is to be split up between all attendees, approx. \$200/attendee. 2 or 3 meetings/ year were proposed, but it was agreed this would be flexible. Tim Fisher advised that if the meeting was held in Melbourne they may be able to assist with venue which could assist in reducing costing.

The question of who should be invited was discussed. MPA are to decide if a representative will attend, or as this meeting one from each state. It was a general feeling that each state should be represented. Other possibilities are: Group Training NSW, Group Training Australia should be included. Phil Routhan Secretary/Chairman? of ANZRA should be approached for name of the new person. Tim Fisher provided contact details for Ross Sadler, PIC (Plumbing Industries Association) Qld. All others on the current list will be included.

Attendance of TAFE or NPSTAG to represent them at meetings was discussed. It was the feeling of the meeting that where possible it is important for TAFE to attend.

Discussion of forming a letterhead led to the decision that this would not be done. Due to risk of statements being issued under PCA. It was agreed this should be left until later dates when the future of the group is clearer.

Costing of the meetings was discussed to be spread between the various Organisations present including AHSCA, AUSTAP, IPA, State MPA's and NPRF/SAWater with TAFE agencies being excused from paying.

The following was agreed:

- 1 The group is to go ahead as a forum.
- 2 Meeting dates will be decided at each meeting — next meeting proposed for end June, early July. Stephen to confirm date.
- 3 Attendees: Stephen to prepare list.
- 4 Venue: Melbourne. Stephen to liaise with Tim Fisher. Then meetings will move from state to state. November potentially will be held in WA.
- 5 Cost: To be distributed amongst the group.

The IPA will recover meeting and secretarial costs by dividing the total outlaid by the attendee organisations and issuing Tax Invoices. Stephen stated that although the IPA required to recoup outlays his time to attend the meeting would not be charged.

Stephen asked all members to consider the proposed aims as listed to be discussed, and to bring to the next meeting for finalisation. List of email addresses to be distributed to all attendees.

Once date is set for next meeting, Stephen will approach all members and invite items for agenda.

Fred Baltetsch advised the meeting that in his role in Victoria and dealing with the MPA–Vic. he will approach them and discuss the aims as listed today and look at the consistencies of the education side of things and as this is a national group with every other state represented, they should have a representative on board. Some members of the group considered this not a good idea. Fred will report direct back to Stephen about discussions.

Tim Fisher will provide information to Stephen for dissemination about products standards being accredited.

Fred Baltetsch spoke about a national project looking at barriers, if any, to the implementation of the new training packages. NPSTAG were approached by the Industry Skills Council to set up committees and appoint consultants to look at the new training package and where it is standing around Australia currently. A steering committee has been formed. Workshops are to be run in a minimum of three states. Paul Naylor is running the one in NSW. One in Qld and SA as well. Will visit WA to interview a provider to ascertain status. Fred sought the support of the states in attendances at the meetings. SA advised they are already preparing for the meeting.

7 General

7.1 Actions

Stephen sought from the members what they wished to achieve between the meetings. If members email to him he will circulate to the group, or alternatively send to the group themselves, and if doing so, ensure Stephen is copied on the email.

Paul Naylor suggested due to possible increases in apprentice wages, preparing a methodology for employers the costing to them of an apprentice, once all extras are added on, what this means

in real terms has to be recovered. Paul will forward the document NSW has prepared to Stephen for distribution.

Paul Naylor sought for the issue of SBNA to be included, with possible canvassing across email for support or non support of SBNA. Expressed concerns about the programme. Fred advised that SBNA in the plumbing industry is taboo in Victoria. Whilst it is a good idea and a great way to get kids into the industry, there are huge issues. SA spoke of the issues they are finding with schools looking to have young ones entered in the programme but not wanting to conform with TAFE timetables.

Discussions included employment of SBNA, training of apprentices and training facilities in some of the centres which need upgrading. The National Training Package is seen as a high priority for this group. John Callaghan asked that an agenda item for the next meeting be how is the group going to approach and implement a national training package. Gary Cook supported that this should be the first issue this group addresses.

7.2 Meeting format

Meeting agreed discussion format is better for the initial meetings, but sought a set agenda.

7.3 Recording of groups involved

For any recording of the groups whether in publicity or records, it was agreed that the list be by organisation. MPA is listed by state.

Meeting closed 3.35 p.m.