

2013

Chairman's Report

Adam Fletcher, PhD, GAICD



From the January 2013 Board Retreat

From left to right at the front: Ben O'Loghlin, Barbara Meurer, Tamara Androsoff, Michael Griffiths, Don Adlam and Michael Fox. From left to right at the back: Paul Barnard and Adam Fletcher. [Bob Millar was also a Director at the time, but was working overseas].

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Overview:

This brief report aims to summarise the key activities and achievements of the all-volunteer Integral Institute Australia (IIA) organisation in 2013. A verbal report was provided by the Chairman, Adam Fletcher, at the 2013 Annual General Meeting (AGM), which was held in November 2013.

In many ways the focus in 2013 has largely been on the internal workings of the organisation, which has been intentionally aimed at building capability that will allow the needs of stakeholders (identified in the earlier consultation rounds) to be met in the medium- and longer-term. Meeting stakeholder needs is seen as the primary end goal for IIA, and the Board assessed that a sustainable future was highly dependent on the initial building of necessary roles, accountabilities, plans, infrastructure (e.g. email, intranet and social media system), etc.

In summary, the distinct activity areas in 2013 were:

- The convening of a two-day Board Retreat in early 2013
- The completion of a whole-of-IIA Risk Management review
- The appointment of a dedicated CEO
- The completion of the first full set of IIA Corporate Statements (Vision, Mission & Values)
- Strategy Development throughout the year
- Action plans aligned with the Corporate Statements and Strategic Priorities
- Set up of a functional intranet with portals for Board and Operational activities
- Refresh of the IIA website and completion of an initial Digital Media launch

Board Retreat: getting to know Board members

In January, a two-day retreat was held in Torquay, Victoria. This was the first opportunity created for the majority of Board members to meet face-to-face. Time was spent re-engaging with the results of the Australia and New Zealand consultations, and to spend time understanding the views, suggestions, passions and concerns related to the identified priorities. Significant amounts of time were allocated to Risk Management, Corporate Statements and Strategy, which will be detailed further in other sections of this report. Time available for social activity was also enjoyed, complimented by good food, wine, deep discussions and light-hearted laughs.

Special acknowledgement goes to Michael Griffiths for organising the event venue and a range of logistics. Thanks also goes to everyone who travelled to attend the meeting, including Tamara Androsoff (NZ), Michael Fox (WA), Ben O'Loughlin (ACT) and Don Adlam (SA). Peter Holliday and Gaby McDonald generously provided additional accommodation and hospitality. Financial and other resources were most significantly contributed by the Cornerstone consultancy (via Michael Griffiths) and by Adam Fletcher personally.

Risk Management: being aware of and managing the risks

From a due diligence perspective, one of the most important activities completed in 2013 was a review of IIA's risks, current risk treatments, and identified requirements for additional risk treatment to better ensure acceptable Institute and Board exposures are maintained. Exposures were focussed on the stakeholder community, the organisation and the volunteers (including directors, who carry legally high risk exposures that volunteers who do not hold director roles).

Specific areas included in the Risk Management activities were: Corporate Governance, Community Engagement, Technology and Digital, Events, Board & Organisational Development, and CEO activities. All higher risk items were flagged for immediate and ongoing management. While all directors were involved in the Risk Management activities, Ben O’Loughlin deserves special mention for leading the activities and allocating significant amounts of time to ensure that a comprehensive process was completed. The other members of the Risk Management working group were Don Adlam, Paul Barnard and Adam Fletcher.

Institute Support and Teams of People: a lean operating environment

To date, a lot of energy has been focused on establishing a necessary set of tools related to the simple, cost-effective and supportive systems required for the running of the organisation and coordination of team members. Because currently IIA does not have a consistent and significant revenue stream we were faced with developing and adopting systems such as email facilities, intranet and regular face-to-face communication mediums that had no immediate financial impacts. Happily, this has been achieved with hard work and time.

Harnessing the enthusiasm of other people interested in assisting IIA to develop has also consumed our time in developing the portfolio teams and bringing everyone up to speed with the tools, with Board activities and assisting team members in getting things done. We are very conscious that we are building a new organisation from the ground up and recognise this take time, although we can be quite impatient at times, and some of us have probably wanted to walk before we could crawl!

Intranet Set-up: our corporate knowledge bank

One significant functional achievement in 2013 was the design, implementation and ongoing use of the IIA Intranet. The site contains four separate portals. These are:

About Integral Institute Australia Shared with 20 people
</site/integralinstituteauabout/>

IIA Inspiration & Conversation Shared with 20 people
</site/integralinstituteauinspiration/>

Integral Institute Australia Board Shared with 11 people
</site/integralinstituteauboard/>

Integral Institute Australia Portfolios Shared with 20 people
</site/integralinstituteauportfolios/>

The intranet framework has been created by Paul Barnard and technically coordinated by the Technology and Digital portfolio, led by Ben O’Loughlin. This framework was also contributed to by a number of others including Ralf Muhlberger, who has been working as a volunteer for more than a year and in the capacity of director since the November AGM.

Three of the four sites are accessed by all currently active volunteers, while one site is accessed by the directors and executive officers of the organisation. The Intranet works as both a corporate repository of information, to help collate all artefacts relevant to the organisation, as well as a ‘sand pit’ for the co-creation of documents. Following on from the initial set-up Paul has worked

persistently and iteratively to ensure that the layout of the intranet serves the needs of the current organisation, with a focus on the simplest version of the sites to house the necessary complexity of the organisation.

CEO Appointment: defining significant roles

In the earlier stages of IIA's existence, due to the low level of operational activity, a dedicated CEO position had not been filled. As the operational activity ramped up the IIA Chairman, Adam Fletcher, had simultaneously filled the role of Acting CEO. In July of 2013 a formal request for a dedicated CEO was called for. The nomination by Paul Barnard, an existing director who was fully up-to-date on all strategic and operational IIA matters, was supported by the Board. Since Paul's appointment in August, there has been a substantial escalation in activities related to the organisation of IIA. Paul has focused our activities in the portfolios by creating short- and mid-term action plans which are also now providing more organisation 'bandwidth' to focus on priorities external to the organisation, such as supporting events, implementing digital engagement plans, and curating content for public access through the IIA website.

Corporate Statements: Vision, Mission and our Values

From the Board Retreat onwards, it was agreed by the Board that a shared view of IIA's Vision, Mission and shared Values was essential. It was also considered necessary that such Corporate Statements were aligned with the mandate IIA was provided by Integral Institute in the US, and the needs identified from the IIA community in Australia and New Zealand. While in many ways these are 'living' documents, it was considered an important milestone in 2013 to agree on the first complete set of Corporate Statements. Importantly, the existence of the first full version of these Statements has allowed the organisation to be guided more clearly to the highest priorities to action given the currently limited resources of the organisation. While all directors were involved in the development of the Corporate Statements, significant stages of activity were contributed by Barbara Meurer, Michael Griffiths and Paul Barnard. It is our intention to make these statements public and open to improvements in 2014.

Strategy Development and Execution: finding our place and direction

At the time of writing this report there is significant activity now focused on what the 'value proposition' will be for one or more key external stakeholder groups who would be seen as potential members of IIA. We have valued very highly the feedback we received with the two past integral community consultation phases we conducted and information from these activities has directly informed strategy formulation to date.

Strategy development has taken on three distinct phases:

1. A short-term strategy proposed by the CEO to drive developments in organisational capacity and turn our attention to promoting awareness of our existence within the integral community
2. A mid-term strategy facilitated by the CEO and others to deliver externally focused (integral community) needs from the consultation phases, developing a suitable membership base model and ensuring real time feedback from all our stakeholders as we progress

3. Visioning for what integral institute will look like in five years' time and the types of activities and offerings that could be available for members

The finalisation and continued implementation of the mid-term strategy is a current priority, and an increasing focus will be on the creation of value for external stakeholders. These activities have been significantly supported by Erin Evans, who has become a director as of the November AGM, and was contributing as a non-director volunteer before that. Ben O'Loughlin has also been pivotal in keeping the momentum on Strategic Development.

One significant benefit of a dedicated CEO being in place since August is the focus on the planning, implementation and progress tracking of the main strategies via Action Plans. There are specific Plans for each portfolio, and Paul Barnard has also been available to have regular meetings with all directors in order to help support the routine progression towards the completion of identified priorities. One challenge faced by a number of directors, is the lack of ability to regularly commit time to IIA, and the Action Plans help identify where expected activity is occurring (or not), which helps the organisation determine where there may be need for additional support, changes in roles, or other adaptations to more effectively use the available resources. Paul has provided clear and consistent leadership with regard to Action Plans, supported in a number of ways behind the scenes by Don Adlam and Barbara Meurer.

Website and Digital Media: showing up, connecting and receiving feedback

During 2013 a refresh of the IIA website was completed, and even more substantial changes are planned for the coming year. The Technology and Digital portfolio was critical in the technical site changes, and a range of inputs came at various times from other volunteers. In addition, there has been a launch of an IIA Facebook page and Twitter account. These channels of communication complement both the website and period newsletter email updates, which has most significantly had content generated by Gaby McDonald, who has been working closely with Tamara Androsoff. Julian Waters-Lynch has also been involved in the activities related to Twitter.

Additional thanks: it's a team effort

Michael Fox, Barbara Meurer, Keith Price and Gerard Bruitzman have been communicating regularly, to support an ongoing and increasing focus on creating value external to the organisation. Initiatives in development include an IIA launch event in 2014, a series of recorded communications on integrally-related topics made available to the public (under the banners of 'Aussie Evolver', and ITC Down Under 2013 convened by Trish Nowland) as well as other potential initiatives. These activities will become much more publically prominent in 2014 and beyond.

Don Adlam has increased his contribution to the organisation and running of IIA in significant ways in 2013. This has included taking on a range of activities related to the planning for, execution of, and writing up of documents related to regular board meetings and the AGM. He has been of significant support to the Chairman and the rest of the organisation with these efforts. Barbara Meurer has also stepped forward on a number of occasions to provide support, including the taking on of the IIA Company Secretary role as of the November AGM. In addition to the activities listed above, Ben O'Loughlin has also show a willingness to take on roles required internally, including the role of Treasurer as of the November AGM.

Both the Company Secretary and Treasurer roles had previously been fulfilled by Bob Millar, who has held those roles since IIA's inception. Bob has also held other roles simultaneously including completing the annual accounts (Bob has been trained and worked as an accountant). There were other contributions that Bob had made over many years, including many before IIA was officially set-up.

A brief summary of these activities is as follows, and Bob's contribution has also been acknowledged in a formal letter from the IIA Board to Bob personally.

- Due diligence activities relating to both strategic and operational priorities. For example, the interactions with the Australia Institute to develop the IIA Constitution as well as agencies such as the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) regarding Not-for-profit Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status.
- Governance and compliance activities covering a wide range of requirements such as financial reporting, auditing and all other ATO and Australian Security and Investments Commission needs.
- Support of and significant contribution to the structure and activities that led to the set-up of IIA, and the running of it once set-up has occurred. Example activities include significant contribution to the long-term Vision of IIA, setting up the IIA entity, and infrastructure such as IIA's bank accounts.

On a personal note, the author of this report, Adam Fletcher, would like to add that he has thoroughly enjoyed working with Bob over these years. The dependable, ethical and clear approach that Bob always brought to everything has been inspirational, both professionally and as a human being.

In addition, all active volunteers of IIA deserve to be acknowledged for their efforts in 2013. Many of these efforts largely occur 'below the radar' but they are often surfaced in meetings and other discussions. The volunteer efforts of all involved truly are the glue that holds the organisation together, which creates a more solid foundation to exist as we build for the future.

Reflections: more to come in 2014

As with many all-volunteer not-for-profit organisations, IIA is challenged by insufficient resources for our (and the communities') aspirations. We understand that our efforts seem somewhat invisible and disappointing to the community. The amount of work that needed to be done to get the organization to this point caught us all off guard. We were not stepping into an established board with a functioning governance structure; we needed to build the organization from the ground up – like a start-up. The infrastructure is now in place to support a viable and vital organization that we can grow together with you. We aim now to increasingly serve the wider integrally-interested community, starting with public activities in 2014.

We have actioned and achieved a great deal in 2013, as evidenced by the details summarised briefly in this report. The simultaneous efforts in diverse arenas such as strategy, technology, community engagement, risk management and professional development come together in a confluence of passion and focus for humanity's ultimate benefit. We aim to leave this place better for our contributions, and we are committed to serving our community with increasing levels of engagement in 2014 and beyond (without losing focus on the essential requirements in the back-office of the organisation).

2014 is already planned to be the year where a clear enhancement of community engagement occurs, now that a strong capability base has been built.

As always, we are open to taking in contributions, feedback and constructive criticism from the integral communities in Australia, New Zealand and elsewhere. So, please feel free to contact us through our website, email addresses, Facebook or other means.

Thank you for your ongoing interest and support.

