



NZUAG NEWS

Issue 8, February 2017

NZUAG News is published regularly to assist in keeping Industry members and stakeholders informed of NZUAG activities relating to improving knowledge and application of the *National Code of Practice for Utilities Access to Transport Corridors*.

Your feedback and comment on any of the matters raised in the Newsletter are welcomed, as part of a process of ongoing industry dialogue.

In this Issue:

- [Comments from the Chair](#)
- [Financial Update](#)
- [Code Compliance and Enforcement 2017 Focus](#)
- [Working Groups Update](#)
- [RIMS Forum, March 2017](#)
- [NUCLA February Board Presentation](#)

From the Chair

Hi All,

Compliance with the Code (of Practice for Utility Operators' Access to Transport Corridors) is a hot topic of conversation whenever it is discussed. This was raised at every Code Awareness seminar that we held last year, and was a key issue during submissions on the last Code review. Under the Code, Corridor Managers are required to report on such things as the number of CARs and Works Completion Notices submitted each year, and Utility Operators are required to report on the number of third party damages incidents each year. NZUAG is then required to report this information to members, the sector and the government, as part of the need to improve both the operation of the Code and overall health and safety. The Board is focussing on this during 2017, and we will be seeking your input on how compliance with the Code can be improved.

Regards,

Paul Swain

Chair, NZUAG

Financial Update

With less than two months to go until the end of the current financial year, the NZUAG finances are looking set to deliver an annual surplus of around \$1,000. This is a very good result given NZUAG delivered a number of seminars on the Code in 2016, says Peter Gilbert, Chair of the Finance sub-Committee.

Peter says that, following on from such a positive 2016/17 outcome, the draft budget presented to the Board by the finance sub-Committee proposes a balanced result for the 2017-18 year. This incorporates the Board's decision to maintain membership fees at their current rate of \$2,000 + GST for full members and \$500 + GST for associate members. Membership invoices for the new financial year will be going out in early April, so keep an eye out for these when they arrive.

The role of NZUAG is to serve its members and the wider industry and community, and to use the funds from members prudently to achieve that. The Board is constantly looking at ways of improving value for members and delivering better services while keeping membership fees stable. That's our aim for the next financial year, Peter says.

Code Compliance and Enforcement 2017 focus

As mentioned above, one of the key themes coming out of last year's successful Code Education Seminar Series, was the need to take a closer look at options to improve compliance with the Code's requirements and how to enforce these if they are not adhered to. Brett North, Code Compliance and Enforcement Group convenor, says that the inaugural collection of KPI data required under Sections 8.2.2 and 8.2.3 of the Code last year threw up a number of issues around data specification, analysis and reporting which need addressing before the next response round commences in a few months time. The Board will be looking to clarify the information requested and make it easier for Corridor Managers and Utility Operators to comply. Brett says that this will involve consultation with the industry on how this can best be achieved, so keep an eye for details.

Working Groups

The Board Working Groups reported on their activities at the February 16 Board meeting. Work in the Code Compliance and Enforcement area has already been touched on above. As a follow-on to last year's successful seminar series round, the **Code Promotion and Awareness Group** is already planning a series of national seminars to be held as part of the next Code review in 2018, says Ross Malcolm, Working Group Convenor. The Board is investigating the use of technology so that people are able to participate without having to travel large distances. Ross also says that the Board is working on ways to get the NZUAG message out more broadly to key industry sectors and groups. One of these is the RIMS Conference on 22 and 23 March. Details on this important event appear below.

Work on updating the NZUAG website and identifying ways in which to introduce and use new technologies continues as the main focus of the **Website Review Working Party** convenor Geoff Thorn. This is an important aspect of NZUAG's operations, as the website is the main portal and source of information of the Code and NZUAG activities.

RIMS Forum March 2017

The annual Road Infrastructure Management (RIMS) forum is taking place on Wednesday 22 and Thursday 23 March at the Waipuna Conference Centre in Auckland. Day two has two concurrent streams: Optimised Decision Making and Corridor Management. The second stream is organised by NZUAG, with Ross Malcolm and Paul Swain setting the scene at 9.10am on the Thursday. The Board now treats this as our "national conference". It is the opportunity to hear and discuss current issues in the CM/VO space. It is an important forum, and all members are encouraged to attend.

Further details on the Forum are available from the forum website www.rims.org.nz, or by contacting Brett North (email brett.north@wcc.govt.nz), the NZUAG rep on the Forum planning committee.

NULCA Presentation

Innes Fisher, Managing Director of Utility Location Services and NZ representative on the National Utility Locating Contractors Association (NULCA), spoke to the Board on issues affecting utility locating businesses in NZ. Of key concern is a general lack of certification/ skills training for utility locators in NZ, and the need for the development of a set of national standards for utility locators to sign up to. The lack of any training and standards means anybody can set themselves up as a utility location business, often with little or no prior knowledge or experience. This often results in poor performance and adverse outcomes across the utility and construction industries. This situation is in comparison to Australia, where companies employing the services of utility locators are increasingly requiring them to be fully certified before they are employed.

Recent moves by NUCLA to change its constitution to enable it to cover both Australia and NZ as an Australasian association is a first step towards harmonising training and certification standards across both countries.

Discussion following Innes presentation focused on ways in which NZUAG might be able to support the work of NULCA in improving training and standards for NZ utility locators. The Board agreed to the need for a greater consistency in utility locating outcomes, and undertook to discuss the matter further over coming months. As decisions, if any, are made in this area they will be reported on in future editions of the newsletter.