

## Annual General Meeting 2021

Thursday 23 September 2021  
12:00am - 12:30pm (AEST)  
Held by Zoom Webinar

### Minutes

#### Introduction (Megan Lewis, Acting President)

32 members attended the meeting online, exceeding the minimum of 13 required for a quorum

2 apologies were received – Michael Hewson and Arnold Dekker

Megan welcomed attendees, acknowledged Traditional Owners, outlined the purpose of the meeting and gave an overview of the Agenda.

The agenda for the meeting and the full Annual Report were available on the EOA website [here](#). Attendees were invited to post questions during the meeting via the zoom chat function.

#### President's Report (Stuart Phinn, Immediate Past President)

Stuart welcomed Megan to the position of Acting President and noted that he had stepped down as President in August 2021.

Stuart spoke on some highlights and key points from the Annual Report.

*“Thanks to everyone for their support and for participating in Earth Observation Australia’s activities including our webinars, preparation for the Mini Forum, as well as a range of other activities to do with the operation of EOA. I especially thank the EOA office – Jo Edkins, Larissa Mar Fan, and Sylvia Michael – and others on the Executive Management Committee – Amy Parker and Megan Lewis.*

*EOA started as the Australian Earth Observation Community Coordinating Group (AEOCCG) in 2012. There were a number of people that helped develop and push out the initial proposal of a national coordination group, including Professor John Trinder and Adam Lewis. The first national online meeting was held in February 2013 and we used principles established under the Joint Remote Sensing Research Program to work jointly and collaboratively across Australia. After that we conducted a national consultation to develop a 10-year community-driven plan. I want to acknowledge Jo Edkins and Bek*

*Christensen, and other key people including Ben Starkey who helped put that plan together. The plan was released in 2016 with five key priorities.*

*Those priorities have guided our activities over the last five years and I am really happy that we have achieved some of them and that we are on track on others. The priorities also set our direction going forward in terms of influencing what happens at national and state and territory levels, making sure that the Space Agency includes EO as a priority area, and ensuring that everybody across Australia, whether in industry, government, or research can participate and have a say in our direction. That approach will continue into the future.*

*Stepping back from EOA was hard but in extremely good hands and I look forward to supporting EOA going forward.”*

Megan thanked Stuart for his outstanding leadership and contributions to EOA and EO more broadly.

*“I acknowledge that Stuart has led EOA and AEOCCG since 2012 and that many people have been involved in the journey, but all involved from all parts and sections of the EO community will share my admiration and respect for Stuart as an outstanding leader and pathfinder in that journey.*

*Stuart, you had a strong and inspiring vision and motivated many others to embrace that vision and work together to advance Earth observation in Australia and internationally. You’ve worked tirelessly and marshalled very impressive support and resources for our work and you have clearly had substantial influence and impact.*

*On behalf of EOA and personally, I would like to thank you Stuart wholeheartedly for your outstanding contributions and leadership to our organisation and EO more broadly.”*

Many attendees also thanked and acknowledged Stuart’s contribution.

## **Presentation of Annual Report**

### **1. EOA membership and activities summary (Sylvia Michael, Secretary)**

Key points:

- Distribution of members across sectors shows our largest group of members are again in research and education (35.31%), followed by state, territory, and local government (16.33%), and Commonwealth government (11.84%). The Commonwealth government membership has increased since last year.

- Distribution of members across Australia shows an increase in Commonwealth government membership, with the ACT now third largest compared to fourth largest last year. Queensland still has the largest representation (26.22%), followed by New South Wales (22.83%), the ACT (14.8%), and Victoria (14.28%).
- Activities we embarked on last financial year –
  - One Whole of Community webinar
  - Three newsletters including varied content that is of interest to our members, promoting new reports, etc.
  - Three workshops as part of the Earth Observation for Government Network, including:
    - Landcover and land use workshop in conjunction with the University of New England
    - Oceanic water biological and physical properties workshop, and
    - A water quality workshop
  - Surveys posted on our website: surveys of benefit to our members and also for associated groups
    - Two surveys for external parties – SmartSat skills workshop and Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) request for input into the Himawari 10 mission
    - Two EOA surveys – attendance at AEO forum and SME engagement
  - Submissions and contributions to consultations
    - Economic study into an Australian continuous launch small satellite program for Earth observation
    - AusCalVal - Establishing Australia as a Global Leader in Delivering Quality Assured Satellite Earth Observation
    - Australian Academy of Sciences (AAS) National Committee for Space & Radio Sciences Decadal Space Plan
    - Parliamentary Enquiry into Developing Australia's Space Industry
  - Advancing Earth Observation Forum – considerable time and effort has gone towards preparation for the AEO forum.

We made a decision earlier in the year to postpone the forum a second time due to the COVID pandemic. We also decided to hold two lead-up events to retain engagement - first was the Mini Forum in August 2021, followed by a series of bi-monthly webinars due to start in October 2021 and continuing until July 2022. The inaugural face to face event will be held in August 2022 at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre.

More information on the forum will be published on our [website](#) and in our newsletters.

## 2. Treasurer's report (Jo Edkins, Treasurer)

The full Treasurer's Report is published in the Annual Report.

Key points:

- EOA did not achieve financial independence during the last financial year. Consequently, EOA does not maintain a bank account nor manage any income or expenditure i.e. there are no finances to formally report for the 2020-21 financial year. EOA is a Level 3 incorporated association, and we are not required to engage an independent auditor.
- To run our operations, EOA receives significant in-kind support from The University of Queensland and the Queensland and New South Wales governments through the Joint Remote Sensing Research Program. This support provides EOA with a home, a registered office and infrastructure, as well as operational and support staff for activities.
- In terms of funding, Geoscience Australia (GA) are currently funding several projects with us and have been for a while. The main project supports EOA and continued consultation with the EO community to foster collaboration between the community, industry, government, not-for-profit, etc. entities that can utilise information derived from EO products and services. This funding has recently been extended to September 2022.
- We have additional funding from GA for the Earth Observation for Government Network (EOGN) with a number of deliverables such as targeted workshops. A new agreement has recently been put in place to extend this activity to August 2023.
- The contracts, agreements and finances for these projects are all managed through The University of Queensland.
- In terms of other funding, we have funding through sponsorship of the Advancing Earth Observation Forum activities. We have received ~\$103,000 to-date and those contracts, agreements and finances are also managed through The University of Queensland.

Megan and Jo acknowledged and thanked the organisations that provide support and funding that keep EOA operating so effectively, as well as the significant in-kind contributions from the Management Committee and others and those are detailed in the Annual Report.

## Resolutions

<b>Proposed Resolution</b>	That the Treasurer’s Report be adopted
<b>Moved by</b>	Megan Lewis
<b>Seconded by</b>	Sylvia Michael
<b>Decision</b>	Treasurer’s Report adopted <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Online votes from attendees recorded by Larissa Mar Fan (Registrar and National Earth Observation Partnerships Coordinator).

<b>Proposed Resolution</b>	That the Annual Report be adopted
<b>Moved by</b>	Megan Lewis
<b>Seconded by</b>	Adrian Fisher
<b>Decision</b>	Annual Report adopted <sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Online votes from attendees recorded by Larissa.

## The next 12 months to 5 years (Megan Lewis)

Key points:

- We are halfway through our decadal plan and the goals and aspirations as outlined in that plan are still very relevant as a focus for our activities over the next five years.
- We have achieved considerable success in quite a number of components of the plan, as demonstrated in this Annual Report. In the coming years our emphasis may shift into components where our effort can be most strategically directed, where we can be most effective or where there is greatest need.
- **Connection** - our membership has been growing and we are actively working to continue that growth through the Forum and other engagement activities through the year.
- **Coordination** - we have shown our coordinating role through our contributions to many of the national discussions, roadmaps, and position papers that have been released in the past year and will continue to come out over the next few years. EOA is now clearly seen as a very important coordinating body and voice, and contributor to those discussions. There will certainly be more of that as we build our external profile.
- **Our role in the international EO community** – there is a need to extend EOA’s profile into the international arena and this may be an area where we direct more focus and activity in the future.

- **Infrastructure and people** – these were a priority last year, and growing Earth observation capacity remains a major priority for us into the future. This need to grow workforce capacity has been emphasised in nearly all of the national discussions and roadmaps, consultations and webinars. This is one of EOA’s priorities and we are in a position to be an influential voice and help build EO capacity, because we represent academia, research, business and government.
- **Financial sustainability** is a priority for us. We’ve been very fortunate to be supported by The University of Queensland, Geoscience Australia, member contributions, and our sponsors, but we need to work towards financial sustainability to enable us to be effective into the future.

### Questions and Discussion (Amy Parker, Vice President)

No questions had been submitted prior to the meeting.

*Amy Parker: “From the membership sector breakdown presented earlier, do you think we are missing out on engaging with certain audiences or do you think we are reaching as far as we want to across Australia? The smallest groups represented are defence and large industry. We have reasonable representation in SMEs, can we reach EO professionals in large industry?”*

*Megan Lewis: “Very good point. Mapping the membership like this provides feedback on whether we are truly representing a sector. We do have activities planned to continue to grow and engage our membership, but we could specifically try to reach into areas where we don’t yet have strong connections.”*

### Concluding Remarks (Megan Lewis)

Megan thanked members for joining this Annual General Meeting and for their broader engagement and contribution, interest and enthusiasm for Earth Observation Australia.

The next AGM will be in September 2022 and will involve the election of half of the existing Management Committee, putting into action the changes to the Constitution that we recently implemented.

Any communication in the meantime is welcomed and can be directed to Sylvia Michael at [secretary@eo.org.au](mailto:secretary@eo.org.au). We continue to post notices of meetings and our ongoing program of events on the EOA website.

**Meeting closed at 12:31 pm.**