

lab lines

Newsletter of the Laboratory Technicians' Branch of STAV

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EDITOR: Svetlana Marchouba

President's report SPECIAL EDITION of LABLINES November 2007

This special edition of LABLINES contains some very important information relating to our Annual General Meeting to be held on Friday 30th November 2007, 8.30am at LABCON, Hemisphere Conference Centre, 488 South Road, Moorabbin.

I urge you all to read the enclosed information carefully, including the explanatory notes so that these important decisions can be made in an informed and responsible manner.

When LTB was formed back in 1980, it was clearly the intention of STAV and of the inaugural meeting that we be a branch of STAV. Our name even says so. This enables us to act with independence as part of STAV to carry out our aims and objectives.

During the last year your committee has been working hard on your behalf. During that time we have seen the completion of the review of our policy on staffing and conditions and we have also seen the beginning of a review and update of the Physics manual and significant progress has been made on a complete rewrite of the Chemistry manual, which has, as you know, been out of print for some years now. All this is in addition to the normal activities of providing you with LABCON and LABLINES as well as the work done in the regions.

Those aims are essentially to be a professional association to promote your best interests as a profession.

For most of the last 27 years we have done exactly that, with independence and integrity and answerable to you, our members.

It has come to light, that there are some irregularities in the way we were established and, recently STAV council have given us the options of either becoming a "special interest group", in which case your committee has an advisory role only and STAV council can in effect control all of our activities and resources, or to "go it alone" and become a separate organization

Becoming a separate entity will involve some changes but need not mean that we will not continue to actively seek to work with STAV in promoting Science education, indeed, throughout this it has been the committee's preferred option to solve the problems that are preventing us from continuing to operate as we successfully have since our foundation.

One of the things that will change is that we will need, for the first time to ask you all to pay a membership fee.

This has been proposed to be \$40 per year. This is enough to cover our operating costs and will be tax deductible for those of you who pay it yourselves. It would of course be reasonable to ask your schools to pay it for you.

This will not mean that those who choose to not pay a fee will not be welcome at LABCON or elsewhere but it is also reasonable that non members would be expected to pay a higher registration for LABCON, and may be asked to contribute towards the cost of regional meetings. We would expect that the non members registration fee for LABCON, might, for example be \$50 above the members fee.

The proposed motions enable us to proceed as an independent and incorporated body and this is in accordance with our legal advice. We are still exploring other solutions to this problem and in the event that a better solution can be found these motions may be withdrawn, but we need to be prepared to go ahead with the proposed motions at the AGM. If we do not propose these motions now, and no other solution is available, a special general meeting at another time would be a costly and inconvenient exercise.

In situations like this rumours are bound to surface. I urge you to speak to an executive member of the committee (myself, Darlene, Mary or Dianne) to get the correct information. This situation is complex and is not something that we undertake lightly.

Geoff Gleadall
President