

Submission

2016 National Research Infrastructure Roadmap Capability Issues Paper

Name	Dr Bill Shaw
Title/role	President
Organisation	Australian Geoscience Council

Other comments

The Australian Geoscience Council (AGC) has eight major Australian geoscientific organisations as its Members. These organisations are considered to collectively represent most of Australia's geoscientists, a number we believe to be around 8,000 individuals, after considering that many are members of more than one organisation. As the peak body for these individuals we have interests in representing industry, government and academic professionals in the fields of geology, geophysics, geochemistry, minerals, petroleum, hydrogeology, environmental and all other aspects of Geoscience.

Our Member Organisations have particular interests, summarised here from their websites (in alphabetical order). Further details are at <http://www.agc.org.au/index.php/links>. We note that there is significant overlap between those organisations that focus on the geoscientists, on the geoscience and/or on both:

- The Association of Applied Geochemists (AAG) is an international organisation founded in 1970 and specialising in the field of applied geochemistry. Its purpose is primarily to advance the science of geochemistry as it relates to exploration and the environment.
- The Australasian Institute of Mining and Metallurgy (AusIMM) has a Geoscience Society that supports geoscientists working in the mining industry. Including the disciplines of mining engineering, metallurgy and others, AusIMM represents 14,000 individuals working in the global minerals industry and provides leadership and opportunities for minerals industry professionals.
- The Australian Geoscience Information Association (AGIA) is a national group made up of people and organisations working in any area of the geosciences at the professional level, and acts as a medium of communication for all those interested in geoscience information.
- The Australian Institute of Geoscientists (AIG) is a professional institute representing geoscientists employed in all sectors of industry, education, research and government throughout Australia.
- The Australian Society of Exploration Geophysicists (ASEG) is a learned society of professional earth scientists specialising in the practical application of the principles

of physics and mathematics to solve problems in a broad range of geological situations.

- The Geological Society of Australia (GSA) was established as a non-profit organisation in 1952 to promote, advance and support earth sciences in Australia.
- The International Association of Hydrogeologists (IAH) is a professional association for those within disciplines related to groundwater, its occurrence, utilisation, testing and management. The Executive Presidency position of the Australian National Chapter is rotated annually through the State Branches.
- The Petroleum Exploration Society of Australia (PESA) is a national organisation representing the interests of all professionals and practitioners in the upstream petroleum industry.

The Australian Geoscience Council makes the following submission:

- I. On behalf of our Member Organisations and our collective stakeholders, the AGC **supports and endorses** the submission being made on the Issues Paper by Dr Phil McFadden, Chair of the *UNCOVER* initiative.

We consider that the UNCOVER process, currently poorly funded, is an outstanding example of how research initiatives in Australia can receive broad industry, academic and government support. This initiative has clearly defined objectives, maps out a clear strategic plan, and provides a focus for a diverse group of researchers and other interested parties that should rapidly help us advance our knowledge of the geology of Australia in the interests of using our mineral endowment for the benefit of the whole community.

- II. On behalf of our Member organisations and our collective stakeholders, the AGC broadly **supports and endorses** the submission being made on the Issues Paper by Professor Sue O'Reilly & Dr Tim Rawling, Chair of the *Australian Academy of Sciences – National Council for Earth Sciences*.
- III. On behalf of our Member organisations and our collective stakeholders, the AGC broadly **supports and endorses** the submission being made on the Issues Paper by Dr Tim Rawling, Chief Executive Officer of *AuScope Ltd*.

We consider that the contribution to national research infrastructure in the area of Geoscience by UNCOVER, AuScope, AMIRA, CSIRO, Geoscience Australia, industry sponsored research, and many other co-related organisations has been and is outstanding, given the low levels of funding support in relation to their significant contributions to the Australian economy and international reputation. In a number of specialist fields we are global leaders and we have the vision to go further. Australia has been, and must continue to be, at the forefront of research in Geoscience.

- IV. We consider that Geoscience is worthy of at least comparable support and funding to three other principle areas of science, specifically Physics, Chemistry and Biology. The

ability of Australian researchers to carry out work on the big science questions (e.g. Where do we come from? What are the natural hazards and risks? How can we continue sustainably?) is dependent on our understanding of complex earth systems. Much of this knowledge is fundamentally governed by the use of scientific methodology and principles developed in Geoscience.

- V. Due to the nature of the planet we live on and the necessity to understand the impact of Geoscience beyond both mainland Australia and beneath our extensive marine region, we consider that Geoscience research must encompass significant international collaboration. Obviously this can provide societal benefits for us all, well beyond the specific impacts of the research programmes.

We will be pleased to elaborate further on our support as required, during the course of your deliberations. Thank you for your consideration of Geoscience in the overall context of the submissions we have specifically supported above and others that we understand will be made.

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The Council of Earth Science Societies in Australia

