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The Strategic Plan of the Australian Geoscience Council – development, implementation and early results

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In late 2014 the Australian Geoscience Council (AGC) embarked on the development of a new Strategic Plan. This has already been widely distributed through our 8 Member organisations (AAG, AusIMM, AGIA, AIG, ASEG, GSA, IAH and PESA). As the peak body of Australian Geoscience we represent more than 8,000 geoscientists.

Given that our Mission is defined in our Constitution, we started with our Vision. This maps our path forward and gives us guidance at each step in making decisions. The Vision we agreed on is appropriately challenging: We will raise the profile of Geoscience to be pre-eminent in Australia and to be recognised as one of the great fields of general science with Physics, Chemistry and Biology.

To maintain our focus on this Vision we have developed three Strategic Pillars: Geoscience Education, Geoscience Advocacy and Geoscience Sustainability. We consider these almost self-explanatory, the third pillar focusing on actions that enable us to ensure the first two continue to be developed long into the future. For each of the Strategic Pillars we have defined Strategies and within each of the Strategies we have defined Targets. Full details of our Strategic Plan are on the AGC website at <http://www.agc.org.au>.

This Strategic Plan is particularly important because the AGC is in the fortunate position of currently being well-resourced, through the results of the very successful International Geological Congress in Brisbane (the 34th IGC). With this however comes the obligation to proactively and responsibly use these resources to support Australian geoscience. We have taken the approach of allocating an annual budget for five years based on the pillars, strategies and tactics in our Strategic Plan. During the course of this period we aim to develop additional sources of income to enable further promotion of Australian Geoscience into the future.

Some of the immediate successes that the AGC has achieved with the Strategic Plan are:

- 1) integration of the efforts of our Member organisations
- 2) coherent development of Geoscience Education in Tertiary, Secondary and (eventually) Primary institutions complemented by public and ongoing professional development education
- 3) engagement with the Australian Academy of Science in developing the next decadal plan for Australian Geoscience (through the AAS-NCES subcommittee)
- 4) formulation of approaches that will provide us with the ability to effectively and proactively lobby Federal and State Governments on important issues including:
 - the UNCOVER initiative of Australian exploration geoscience research;

- support for the ongoing funding of government geoscience agencies, both Federal and State;
- advocacy for satisfactory geoscience representation in the Australian Research Council (ARC) funding allocations;
- support for policy initiatives to help manage the impact of the resource industry business-cycle on our Member organisations and the geoscientists that they represent.

